

From
Broom
to
Heather

A Summer in



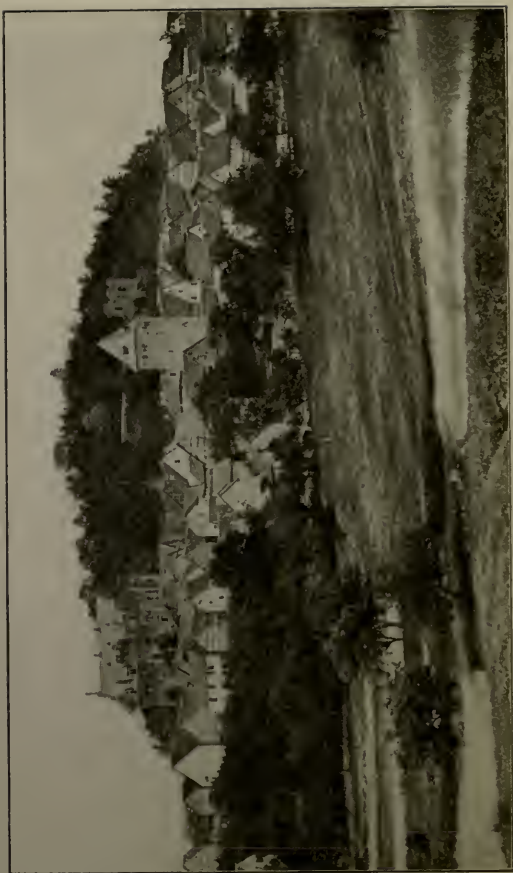
a German Castle

James Taft Hatfield

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STAUFENBERG

FROM BROOM TO HEATHER

A Summer in a German Castle

BY
JAMES TAFT HATFIELD



CINCINNATI: JENNINGS AND PYE
NEW YORK: EATON AND MAINS

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AT the time of our invasion of Germany, the whole countryside was glowing with the blossoms of the broom, that “plantagenet” which has earned for itself so large a place on the pages of history; when we came away, the wide plains were at the height of their brilliant display of gorgeous heather. In fact, the calendar of our whole summer in rural Hessa was one to be marked in terms of floral notation.

The following records, written among the scenes which they portray, were first printed in the *Chicago Daily News*, and I desire to express my obligations to Mr.

INTRODUCTION

Charles M. Faye, of that newspaper, for his courteous permission to republish them. To "Miriam" I owe the title of the book—not to mention other things.

September, 1903.

J. T. H.

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FROM BROOM
TO HEATHER



CHAPTER I

Taking Possession



ERE we four are, scarcely realizing that we have landed in Germany and yet already fairly settled to our order of daily life in the quaintest of all imaginable surroundings, just three weeks from the day when we left Chicago. We have been traveling all the time, and the restful and delightful two weeks' ocean voyage from Baltimore to Bremerhaven has drawn so heavy a veil between us and our native shores that their very existence seems like some half-forgotten dream. As to there being any bonds of duty still hold-

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ing us to that far-off, vaguely remembered continent, the idea is quite too unreal to grasp. We four exiles are not unpatriotic, we tell each other from time to time, and our really vigorous and aggressive loyalty is merely dormant for awhile. Let no one blame this oblivion who has not partaken of the life of a community perched upon the higher slopes of the Hessian hills and within a system of feudal fortifications which go back to the beginning of the twelfth century.

It was only three days ago that we experienced the charm of getting to land after a fortnight upon the wilderness of waters. Even while the steady-going *Brandenburg* was plowing its way up the broad outlet of the Weser, we were greeted from afar by the sweet fragrance of the blossoming year at its very height,

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by the odors of clover and lilacs, by blooming lindens and fruit-trees, by the laburnums, with their wealth of drooping clusters of yellow blossoms, and by the majestic horse-chestnuts with their perfect candelabra of stately flowers.

Our journey overland to this spot, up the valley of the Weser and down the valley of the Lahn, has opened up an endless succession of perfect pictures: now a view of rolling plains, unmarred by fences and disclosing all the beauty of waving fields of grain in their most attractive tints of approaching ripeness, now a glimpse into somber evergreen forests, where through the tall pink stems of the pines were seen the cool depths of moss and rock. The hill-slopes are all ablaze with glorious golden sunbursts of the "flower of the broom," and every bit of garden spot is filled with

FROM BROOM TO HEATHER

rose-bushes, with the red and the white thorn-trees, with lilacs and "gold rain." It is the Germany of order and contentment, of settled life and patient industry, of kindly habits and simple consideration which has taken us under its friendly protection.

If we are too much bewildered by the tide of unusual sensations to be able to adjust ourselves immediately to a sober life, let it be borne in mind that we are undergoing the early sensations of playing truant from the strenuous school of Chicago life, with its incessant whirl and pressure of opportunity and responsibility. When one comes to look at the matter face to face, it was rather a daring plan for us to pull up violently all the roots which bound us so meshily to a thousand relations of settled existence, and to transplant ourselves for the sum-

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mer into this utterly remote little community, where all the details of daily life and habit are about as alien to our own as though we were in another planet, instead of in another hemisphere. Think of the tremendous weight resting upon the shoulders of the man who has had to conduct three young women, all endowed with a very lively sense of the precise fitness of things in the environment in which they were brought up, through all the changes and chances of the journey to this Promised Land. I confess to a new respect for Moses and Joshua, and I assert myself the peer of the California pioneers of '49. The intense interest of the members of the party as to what they were getting into grew more vivid with each step of the untried way, and came to its climax yesterday afternoon as our train swept down the winding valley of

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the Lahn, each new curve of which promised to reveal at one sudden disclosure the picture which had been filling the imagination and the dreams of my expectant flock for considerably more than a year.

“O, is n’t that the castle?” cried Portia, as the huge ruin of the Gleiberg lifted its great shoulders above the domelike crest of a dark, evergreen-crowned hill.

“Is our hill really going to be as high as this one?” called out Miriam from the opposite side of the carriage.

“Do you suppose we can get as grand a view as this from any of our windows?” added Patty before I was able to give a rational answer to either of the other two.

It was with an unbounded satisfaction, no less genuine than that felt by Columbus when he anchored off the Bahamas,



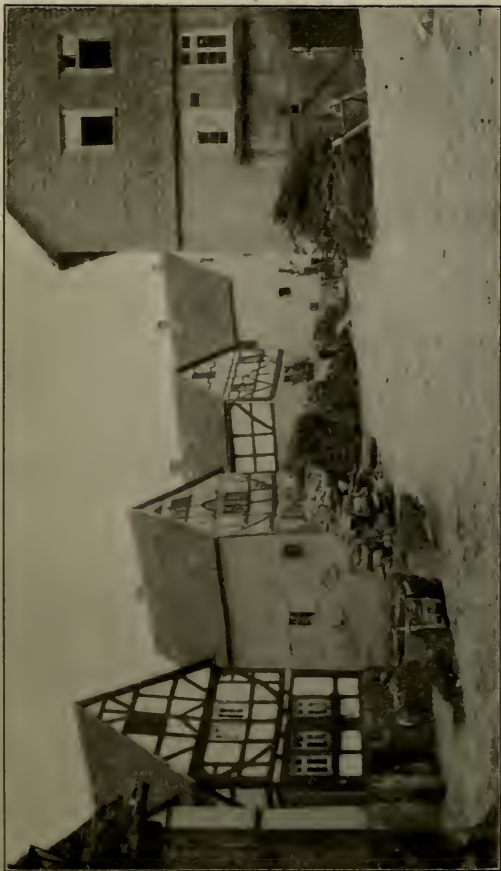
THE CITY GATE

FROM BROOM TO HEATHER

that I greeted the first sight of Staufenberg—tile-roofed houses clustered together, square tower of the ancient city gate, gray castle and forest-crowned hill-top—as we slid past the little station of Friedelhausen. During all the months of anticipation our fancy had been busying itself with the pleasing picture of the stately castle perched upon its high foothold, but it was a great joy to find it on the first view so much larger and more imposing and picturesque than our imagination in its boldest flights had pictured it. Built massively of dark basaltic rock and red sandstone, its steep gable and turrets showed their shining covering of slate, which gleamed in the sun like the scales of a dragon. A great round battlemented tower forms the chief feature of the front, rising from the ground to the highest story; round tur-

FROM BROOM TO HEATHER

rets crown the corners. Round the castle, but lying lower on the hillside, still partly girt by its ancient gray stone wall and guarded by its tall gateway and tower, lies the peaceful little community of Staufenberg, a place of some seven hundred and fifty souls, which proudly maintains the dignity of the legal designation "Stadt," a title which it has enjoyed for many ages. Its houses are grouped confidingly around and below the castle inclosure, and are made with heavy exposed oaken frames, filled in by brick and covered with stucco. They peer out from among trees and shrubs, and the entire top of the rounded hill is deeply covered by a somber forest of great trees. At the very top of the hill stand the ruins of the older castle, destroyed near the end of the Thirty Years' War; but all is hidden by the green



INSIDE THE CITY GATE

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branches, except some irregular pieces of dark wall which belonged to the inferior parts of the group that covered the hilltop in feudal times.

✧ All these features showed themselves as our train hurried on to Lollar, the nearest town, lying about two miles from the hamlet on the hillside. The worthy, kindly keeper of the castle, Ludwig Dorf, was waiting on the platform, and was easily recognized by his expectant look of cordial welcome. I spent a few days in his charge at this place some six years ago, and have had more or less negotiations with him since, and the only contentions which have ever arisen have been somewhat stubborn ones as to which of us two should be allowed the privilege of paying for certain "extras." I might as well forestall all legitimate curiosity in regard to our occupancy of

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the castle at this time by saying that the charges to each of us are three marks a day, and that this price includes ample and wholesome meals with the most willing service. We are the sole residents, and have unlimited privileges as regards the amount of room occupied.

An ox-cart was waiting outside the station to bring up our five trunks, and the Staufenberg baker's wagon, transformed into a really smart jaunting-car, received us as its passengers. The steep uphill journey was slow, but full of new sights and experiences. As we rose above the village of Lollar the view widened, until we overlooked the broad floor of the valley, with its winding roads, bordered with fruit-trees, its groves, and its patchwork of carefully-tilled fields. We caught sight of red-roofed village after village, nestling

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among green orchards upon the sloping hillsides or hidden in the depths of some side valley. The shining river gleamed along between verdant meadows, spanned here and there by graceful arched bridges of stone. Range upon range of hills filled the background, some carefully tilled, some dotted with groups of thrifty trees, some showing little communities perched upon their summits, and most of them thickly covered with the black-green masses of ancient fir-forests, with the lighter shade of younger trees, or with oaks and beeches in their new summer foliage.

The vast bulk of Gleiberg Castle, a complex of all the buildings which make up a complete mediæval establishment in unusual preservation, dominated the southwestern horizon; further back the tall round column of the tower of the

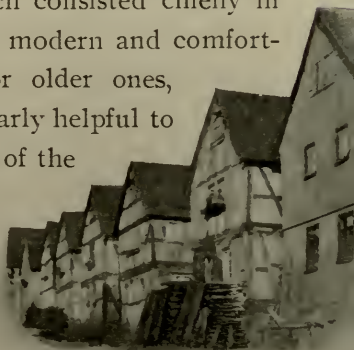
FROM BROOM TO HEATHER

ruin of Vetzberg cut the sky, and at a still greater distance loomed the gigantic mass of the Dünsberg, the highest mountain in this Hessian group, shrouded with the mists which so often play about its summit. Coming still higher we overlooked the little stone parish church of Kirchberg, going back to an unknown antiquity and standing almost alone in its leafy churchyard by the river. Behind it, in one of those beloved gardens which make the surroundings of the German rural pastor so idyllic, was the roomy parsonage.

Now we reached the steep and crooked lanes of Staufenberg, and held on as well as we might, while the cart climbed upward over the cobblestones, and we impoverished our already overworked vocabulary in exclamations at the quaintness of one feature after another; at the

FROM BROOM TO HEATHER

buildings, the nooks and corners, the costumes, the perspectives, the sky-lines. The curious old place had changed little in the six years since I had seen it, and the changes, which consisted chiefly in substituting more modern and comfortable buildings for older ones, while not particularly helpful to the archaic charm of the place, were by no means radical enough to detract from it to any great degree.



PRINCIPAL STREET IN STAUFENBERG

The younger inhabitants of the place, happy and dirty, made very effective pictorial groups in different spots on the steep lanes, the girls in long, bunchy dresses, the boys round-capped or bareheaded. They stood

FROM BROOM TO HEATHER

about the lanes or peered from behind fences and hedges, while from back of the rows of flower-pots at the neatly-curtained little windows the curious faces of their mothers looked out at the newcomers fresh from another continent, with the spray of their ocean voyage still upon them.

We came to the pointed Gothic archway of the ponderous ancient tower which rises above the city gate, and entered its dark and cavernous depths. The children who had been playing about the gateway jumped upon the narrow stone ledges which run along its sides, and flattened themselves against its murky wall in a very effective Hessian frieze. At last we reached the frowning wall of the castle inclosure, embrasured, battlemented, and provided with the wickedest conveniences for the shooters

FROM BROOM TO HEATHER

of crossbows and the dispensers of boiling tar, and halted under a hospitable and spreading walnut-tree just outside one of its stone portals, the great timbered gates of which stood wide open in welcome. Down the slope which leads to the terrace behind the castle came running to meet us the sturdy, beaming wife of the keeper and his only child, Emmy, a daughter of about thirteen years. From the ter-



FROM BROOM TO HEATHER

race we entered the main floor of the castle (the front side goes down a story and a half deeper), and were shown our way up the broad, winding stairs of pinkish-brown stone which fill up the thick-walled round tower in the front of the building, and which furnish the only means of going from one story to another. An ample double doorway opened into a roomy hall at least twenty feet square, lighted by one leaded front window.

On either side of this hall were our living rooms. The one occupied by the leaders of the expedition takes up the whole corner of the story. It is so large that one is continually in danger of being lost in it, and Patty maintains that getting dressed there is like playing the old-fashioned game of stage-coach or "Going to Jerusalem." The imposing size of the room is further added to by the three



THE KEEPER AND HIS FAMILY

FROM BROOM TO HEATHER

broad window niches which go through the thick walls (they are about four feet deep), and each of which gives space for just our party of four. From them we can look out through the broad stone casements toward west and south over a landscape that suggests all that poets have dreamed of paradise. Our good hosts had set two beds in the room, well supplied with new bedding, a wardrobe, a large center-table, a sofa of red plush, and an abundant supply of chairs and other furniture, although the room looks, in spite of all, like an expanse of ocean, dotted here and there by a sail. The window recesses were shut off by long lace curtains, but happily they are so hung that they can be drawn completely aside so as to give an unobstructed outlook. Fortunately, also, the floor, which is made of satin-like strips of unpainted

FROM BROOM TO HEATHER

fir, running in unbroken extent the whole length of the room, has not been covered by any carpet or concealed by paint. Our first council of war was held upon the question whether we ought not to have a large screen to shut off the beds from the rest of the apartment, and, as a result, the village carpenter was forthwith summoned, and a commission for such a screen, together with drawings and specifications, was given him. He seemed not a little dazed by the suddenness of the affair, and among other things was quite unable to determine the day of the week, so that we wait for the result of his workmanship with no little curiosity.

Our first meal was served the same evening in the dining-room below stairs, and contained some surprises to the uninitiated—rye bread and unsalted butter



SWINEHERD AND NIGHT-WATCHMAN

FROM BROOM TO HEATHER

are both very satisfactory articles to those who have been trained to appreciate them, but I noticed with pain that none of the party except myself could make terms with them. However, the fresh eggs and tea were good, and no one was compelled to go to bed hungry. It was probably the burden of responsibility on my shoulders which kept me long awake, and just as I had begun to drop asleep there sounded at the foot of the castle wall a blast upon a horn which seemed to be the last trump of the dead, and startled me almost out of my senses. It was only the village watchman (who holds, at the same time, the honorable office of communal swineherd), going through the streets and sounding the hour of midnight on his powerful hunting horn. This has a soothing, consoling effect upon the natives; but it drove

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slumber from my eyelids for the greater remainder of the night. I remember that when I began living in Lucknow years ago, the discordant cries of a night watchman, combined with the sardonic wailing of the jackals, robbed me of much sleep. After some days the watchman was relieved from his duties, and my rest improved immediately.

Not long afterward, however, the trouble began anew. I was told in explanation that the wife of a rich man living near by was a great invalid, and had much trouble about sleeping. As soon as the watchman had been taken away she had suffered so badly from insomnia that it was found necessary to bring him back, and her nerves were at once relieved.

Inasmuch as I managed after a while to get accustomed to the din, and even



THE KEEPER'S LODGE

FROM BROOM TO HEATHER

came to feel a delicious sense of security in hearing it filter through my dreams, I have good hope that we shall all live down our first sense of the indignity practiced by this solitary guardian of the peace upon his lonely rounds through the crooked streets of the sleeping little town—the young women profess to enjoy his serenades already. In the still, pure air of this height his notes have an unusual and, one can but think, an unnecessary penetration. As all entrances to the castle and its inclosures are ponderously barred and locked nightly, and as the keeper lives near by in his lodge, it would seem not unreasonable to hold that our safety was fairly well cared for without this extra precaution.

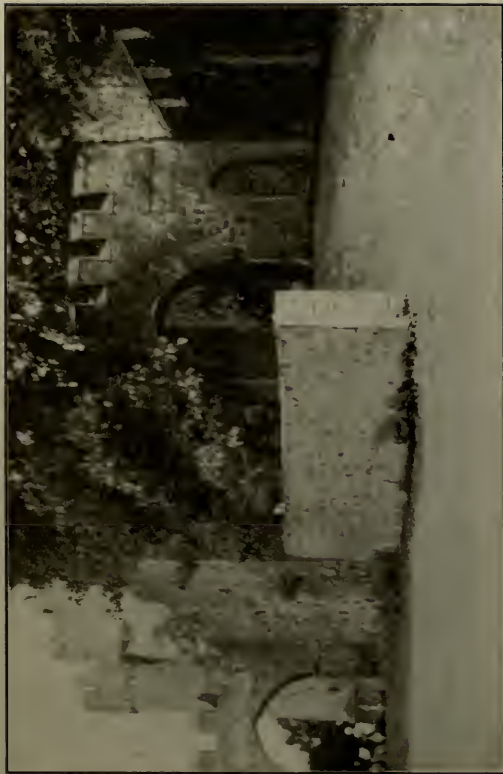
CHAPTER II

The Castle



UR castle was built in 1517, as is shown in a well-preserved inscription carved in high relief upon an oblong red sandstone tablet beside the chief Gothic gateway.

The coats of arms upon it are those of a Count Frederick of Rolshausen and his wife, Anna Rau von Holzhausen. It is an amiable trait in the German peasant, that when he puts up a house or barn he inscribes it with his wife's name as well as his own, recognizing her all-important part in the task of home-building. The same trait is shown by our



ENTRANCES TO THE CASTLE

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nobleman, who was a brother of the count who was occupying the older castle at the top of the hill at the time when the Unterburg was built. The Rolshausens were a local noble family which for generations had the office of stewards of the counts of Ziegenhain, a powerful and wealthy race, the lords of Staufenberg as well as of many other estates throughout this region. As the counts of Ziegenhain were not often in residence at Staufenberg for any considerable length of time, the Rolshausens were practically rulers of both castles. Their coat-of-arms shows a crossed pair of paddles or oars, and is often found on old structures in Staufenberg or upon tombstones in the ancient church of Kirchberg, near by at the edge of the Lahn. A faded portrait of Frederick hangs in the hall of weapons just below

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the room where I am now writing. It shows a large-featured, stern-faced man, clothed in armor and holding in his gauntleted hands a helmet tipped with flowing plumes of white ostrich feathers.

When the upper castle was destroyed by the Swedes in 1647 our building was spared, because a member of the Rols-hausen family was serving as an officer in the Swedish army. About 1670 it came into the possession of a Baron von Grass, who took up his residence in it, and whose descendants wrote as their family name "Von Grass zu Staufen-burg." In 1780 it was bought by a superannuated clergyman, and in 1801 was sold for 900 florins to a speculator, who promptly began to break it up. The lead upon its roof was sold for more than had been paid for the whole property, and even the steps of the round tower were



OUTER FORTIFICATIONS

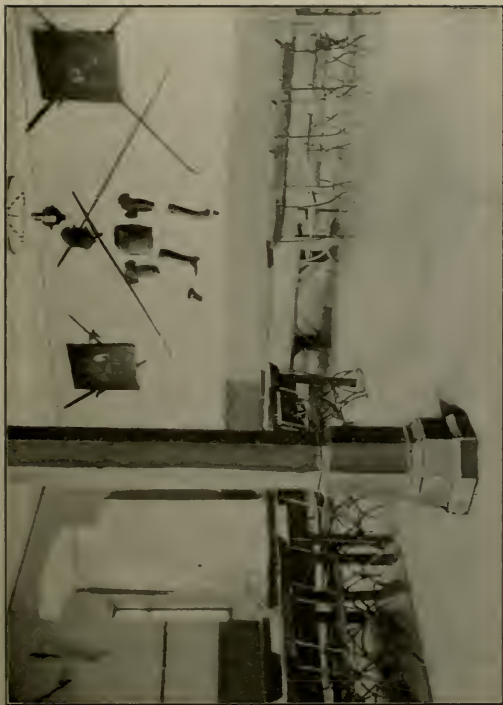
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taken away for use in a hospital at Giessen. Then a merchant of that city bought the ruin, laid out a flower garden about it, and was in the habit of making daily trips to the spot on horseback. After his death another citizen purchased the property, and erected an entrance lodge, which also served for some years as a restaurant. In May, 1821, the revolutionary students of the University of Giessen made a secession to the place in a body, on account of conflict with the troops in the academic town. They spent several days camped in sheds and outbuildings; as a result the obnoxious regiment of soldiers was removed from Giessen to Worms.

In 1858 the two Hessian princes, Ludwig and Heinrich, who were studying at the University of Giessen, became interested in the picturesque ruin, and bought

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it. They commissioned Professor Hugo von Ritgen, the restorer of the Wartburg, and one of the greatest authorities on mediæval German architecture, to restore the castle, its surrounding buildings, and all its walls and works of defense, in a style which should strictly conform to the original designs. The outer works, walls, and gateways were already completed, when in 1862 occurred the marriage of Prince Ludwig to Queen Victoria's daughter Alice. The expenses involved in building a new palace for the English bride at Darmstadt were so great that it became necessary to suspend the restoration of the castle. Only about fourteen years ago the present young ruler of Hessa, the Duke Ernst Ludwig, who had in the meantime succeeded to the throne and to the ownership of the castle, had the



THE LARGE HALL

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whole building restored, and it now stands in perfect condition, showing in correct style the features of the place at the end of the fifteenth century. The reigning duke still owns and maintains the property, but has never resided in it.

Apart from the heavily-built foundation story, which abuts against the hill on one side and opens out upon a green slope on the other, and which serves on occasion as the harboring place for a large flock of sheep overnight, the castle has three stories and two long attics or lofts, extending from end to end of the steeply-pitched roof. The western end of the first story is entirely occupied by a large hall, the walls of which are covered with portraits, armorial devices, and an interesting lot of relics of the days when knighthood was in flower—the collection having been got together with

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the assistance of the Baron von Rabenau, residing at Friedelhausen, a neighboring chateau. There are two long tournament lances, now dropping to pieces with age, but which have evidently seen hard usage; the heavy weight of each lance is counterpoised by a large wooden cylinder behind its handle. There are pikes and shields, helmets, halberts and swords, war maces, and quite a number of those unlovely hand-to-hand implements which recall the merry days of the



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Peasants' War: spiked bludgeons, "morning stars," axes, and hammers. In the same story is the kitchen, where our meals are cooked by the keeper's wife, and two dining-rooms, one of which we make use of when the weather does not invite us out of doors to have our meal upon some one of the various terraces.

The round corner tower on this floor is used as a storeroom for various articles belonging to housekeeping. Underneath it lie the secret dungeons of the Burgverliess, which stand unchanged since the foundation of the place. This morning we got the keeper's wife to take us into the storeroom, and allow us to see the dungeons, the existence of which would not be suspected by the chance visitor. The floor is covered by a sort of rug, because of uncanny, cellar-like suggestions which are prone to steal up from

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the depths below. When this was rolled back a heavy square of hardwood showed itself in the center of the floor, so warped and wedged in that we had hard work to pry it up, and succeeded only after vehement efforts with a crowbar. When it was removed we saw nothing but a very black round hole, but a candle fastened to a string was provided and lighted at both ends. We lowered this carefully into a cylindrical chamber eight feet high, built of solid stone, with an arched top. In the floor of this room was another round hole, through which we allowed the candle to go still deeper, while the different spectators expressed their feelings in accordance with their respective temperaments. Patty turned away out of dislike of the earthy odor which came up; Miriam stood about, fascinated with romantic terror at the mem-

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ories which cling around such a spot, while Portia watched developments with the keenest and most objective scientific interest. Nine feet lower the candle went, before it rested upon the bottom of the chamber, which was empty, except for a few scraps of old wood that had fallen in. A lively imagination could easily transform them into bones and such things. The place was like a trap, out of which it was absolutely impossible to climb, and we were all more than willing to close the cover and betake ourselves to the bright light of the sun, to the hedges of wild roses and the blossoming locusts.

I confess that when we first came I had some apprehension lest the members of my tribe, hailing, as they did, from New York and Chicago, those emulous centers of all things modern and express,

FROM BROOM TO HEATHER

might be unable to adapt themselves to conditions which prevail here as a matter of course. From the days of the Thirty Years' War Germany was for many generations a poor country, a very poor one, in which the chief problem was to keep elementary life going by hook or by crook, and there remained little time or means whereby to gain the luxuries of life. An inborn enjoyment of nature, an easy conviviality, a priceless endowment of pride in honest workmanship did much to soften the rigor of the struggle for mere existence; but mere existence had to be a chief aim for a long time after the close of that terribly destructive contest, which practically stamped out German culture at a time when our ancestors were founding colleges and writing books in the New England to which they had brought unimpaired the magnificent



ERNST LUDWIG, GRAND DUKE OF HESSIA. OWNER OF
STAUFENBERG CASTLE

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heritage of the older civilization they had left. It is little wonder that provincial Germany has accommodated itself to inconveniences and makeshifts which to the offhand judgment of the American seem very primitive. The great material prosperity of keen, industrial modern Germany, as seen in such centers as Berlin, has not as yet had time to diffuse itself through the remoter districts.

Moreover, in our canons of criticism we are unconsciously inclined to overlook the inheritance of discomfort at home which we have come to regard as inevitable, and to be forcibly struck by that in a foreign land to which we are unaccustomed. In our own daily household life we do and omit things which to the German mind seem absolutely incompatible with comfort and happiness, and honors are very easy when it comes

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to striking a balance on this side of the ocean.

First of all comes a matter which appeals to everybody—that of food. The German cuisine is largely adjusted to the liberal use of alcoholic drinks; in fact, a German dinner frequently presents a certain number of dishes grouped about a series of wine courses and entirely secondary to them. On the other hand, the Americans in my care fairly despise the taste of things alcoholic; they can not away with them—and this is a matter of ingrained habit from their earliest days. Consequently they have to judge of German bills of fare only after the alcoholic element has been subtracted, which is a good deal like the play of “Hamlet” without the appearance of the personage named in the title rôle. And so with a hundred other matters of taste and train-

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ing, with, of course, the premise that the rural Hessian palate is in general less elective in its choice than that of the American, whose first working principle is: "The best is none too good for us." My own repeated experiences in roughing it in various parts of the world have made me perhaps somewhat incurious as to the absolute degree of refinement displayed in the cuisine. I have occasionally reaped the ill-will of acquaintances whom I have sent to hotels and boarding-places which I liked, but which were obnoxiously primitive or penurious in their bill of fare as judged by other persons' standards.

All my doubts have been removed here by adjustments on both sides; our entertainers have gladly modified their catering at our request, and we have come to accept things which did not

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please us at first. There is a very intelligent baker in the village who supplies as good rolls as I have ever eaten anywhere; in the keeper's stable are two carefully kept cows, which are the pride of the establishment and which furnish plenty of good milk and cream, while fresh butter is churned on the place almost daily. The ancient subterranean cellar back of the terrace serves as a refrigerator for keeping food fresh and cool, a vegetable garden in the "Zwinger" below our windows produces abundantly for our table, especially a liberal supply of fresh lettuce, and the meats are beyond all reasonable criticism. While the range is limited, our appetites in this fine tonic hill air are growing daily, and we come ravenously to our dinners, which are served on a sociable table just large enough for four people. This meal



ANCIENT UNDERGROUND STABLE

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is always opened with a palatable soup, which reaches the right spot and suggests more. In fact, our appetites are now, after ten days, in such good order that my conscience troubles me not a little in regard to the other party to the contract.

There has also been the matter of warmth. The upper stories of the castle have no means for supplying artificial heat, which can not be looked upon as an especial evil in the summer months, and yet for a few days it seemed as though we had never been comfortably warm in all our past lives, nor were ever likely to be so again. The art of warming houses has never been developed on the Continent, as I know all too well, who shivered through a winter in Berlin, working in my room wrapped in a heavy overcoat and changing my home three

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times because of the inability of landlords to keep a contract as to a minimum recorded temperature. It is an old story. While the poet Uhland worked during the winter of 1811 at the national library of Paris, in the height of the Napoleonic wealth and splendor, he had to warm one hand after the other over a brazier of coals in order to keep them from freezing, and to write first with the right hand and then with the left, thawing them out alternately.

There is a good side which results in the hardening of the physique of those who survive the low temperature and can sleep in rooms that suggest the atmosphere of an American refrigerator. The German popular consciousness overwhelms with scorn the weakling who likes to spend his time "behind the stove," just as at sea the supreme epithet

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of contempt which one sailor can apply to another is that of "galley ranger." The toughness and vitality of the native type doubtless goes back to this Spartan régime, and we saw with admiration the dear little German city boys of twelve who visited the castle the other day playing about in the tall wet grass in the midst of a steady rain without arousing the slightest concern of the teachers who came with them. Schoolgirls come in similar weather, wearing thin dresses with low necks and short sleeves. As for ourselves, we are fairly comfortable now, and when we bestir ourselves out of doors in the inviting sunshine, as we ought to do most of the time, we can avoid chills without the use of our winter wraps.

The story above our own contains eight large rooms, besides hallways and

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closets, all unfurnished and showing no striking features except the large double doors, with their elaborate hinges of wrought-iron work (an art in which the Germans surpass ourselves by far), the leaded windows, and the long stretches of smooth, clean flooring. "What a place this would make for a hop!" sighed Portia, who is fresh from an Eastern college, and has had her own lively part in all the doings of her fraternity. "Or for an initiation!" she added, peering into the empty little circular room in the round tower at the corner. From this story a staircase goes up to the first attic, which is used as a "Kornboden," and contains a small amount of grain together with the wooden fan by the help of which it is winnowed, according to good Scriptural analogies. Out of this attic go glass doors leading to the battle-

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ments of the five towers and turrets, the roofs of which are covered with heavy sheet lead. We are free to go out upon them at all times, and perhaps the sense of proprietorship is stronger here than elsewhere, for the sweep of landscape and the oversight of all the country roads is more suggestive of the lookout idea of castles in general than that gained from any other point in the building.

CHAPTER III

Our Daily Life



THE chief effect of the heavenly beauty of this charming region seems to be a sort of realization or foretaste of the eternal rest of the saints, for we are perfectly content to let things go their own way and to do nothing. As day after day goes by, the thought of any particular effort or enterprise becomes less tempting, and we are satisfied with each hour as it runs, forgetful of the past and unmindful of the future. I am pretty sure that this is a wise and wholesome use of a vacation, however many inviting attractions are stretching out their hands in welcome.

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The tall white column of the observation tower on the summit of the Dünsberg beckons to us across the six or seven miles of pure air which intervene; Wetzlar with its romantic associations, Grossen Linden with its ancient church, Schiffenberg with its cloister, Krofdorf with its immense forest, Lohra with its storks' nest, and hundreds of other quaint and remunerative sights are reminding us that now is the time to make their acquaintance, but no one of us seems anxious to make the first move. What is the use? Our days are amply filled, as it is.

At seven o'clock we waken at the ringing of the bell in the tower of the city gate, and prepare for breakfast, which comes at a quarter of eight. It is set at a round table in a large room on the lower floor, with wide windows looking

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out at one end upon the lindens and rose bushes in the courtyard, and at the front over the steep houses of Staufenberg, down the sloping fields toward Lollar, and across the river to the pyramidal hills crowned by the Gleiberg and Vetzberg. For breakfast we have coffee and chocolate, fresh rolls from the village baker's, honey and Scotch marmalade, the last having been got from a dealer in "Delicatessen" at the nearest provincial capital. Immediately after breakfast, which is always cheerfully lengthened out by unconstrained talk, we have got into the way of taking a turn up to the top of our hill.

Just behind the castle is a series of broad terraces of different shapes and dispositions. From the main doorway we step out upon one which is overhung by lilacs and locusts and surrounded by



THE COURTYARD

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the masonry which supports the other terraces, while a broad slope carries the road down to the entrance gateway and into the village. On this terrace is the somber arched entrance to the subterranean cellar, which is much older than the castle in which we live. Von Ritgen, in his learned monograph, states that an older authority has recorded the existence of an inscription, "1405. Fredericus de Rolshusen," cut above the doorway, but adds that in spite of the most conscientious investigations he was not able to discover any such carving. A day or two ago I climbed up to get a closer view of this dark, moldering stone arch, and found in its crumbling surface the unmistakable remains of a Gothic inscription, doubtless the one which has just been mentioned.

The keeper has offered to clean the

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grimy stone with potash, and I shall be not a little elated if it proves possible to recover what had been so completely lost. The keeper says that he had never noticed it or heard of its existence. It stands in a rather inaccessible place, and is shaded by some beams which support a modern roof.

Built out from the supporting masonry against the hillside is a long open shed made of heavy, well-joined timbers and roofed with tiles. Underneath it are tables and benches where visitors to the castle take refreshments, which are always obtainable from the old cellar nearby. Over the roof hang pendent trailing bushes of wild roses, red and white.

A few feet higher is another large terrace, planted with shady lindens and horse-chestnuts. At one side there crop out from the hill the thick crystalline



STAUFENBERG FIELDS

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columns of a basaltic formation, which look like huge organ pipes. This formation underlies the whole hill, and is common in the region round about us. Built into these natural columns are fragments of old ruins, so continuous with the native rock that they seem to be, like it, original rather than a creation of men's hands. Equally elemental seems also the flight of worn gray stone steps which winds up among the dark rocks to one of the higher levels. Overtopping all this, and making a rugged background to the whole scene, is the great inclosing wall of the castle grounds, which is interrupted here by one gateway—a large double door set in a square framework of ancient weathered red sandstone. When this door is opened, you think only of the gates of paradise, for as soon as you have thrown its rusty

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bolts and pushed it open upon its grating hinges you disclose the frame of the loveliest picture which can be conceived of, "sweet fields arrayed in living green and rivers of delight." The hill falls off so steeply that no foreground is seen; you have simply a look off into an endless panorama of landscape which shades into all sorts of purple tones in the distance.

Before going through this gate, however, we are likely to go up on our favorite terrace, a high walled-up embankment or bastion, about thirty feet square, protected by a railing on every side so as to prevent our falling out of the grand duchy of Hesse-Darmstadt into the kingdom of Prussia or any other of the neighboring dominions which are visible between the trees which surround this platform. We are on a little higher level

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there than when in our own rooms, and look right down on the top of the roofs of the highest houses in the village.

But now we go through the square gateway and come into the perfect park which competely covers the upper part of the hill. On two sides this hill goes down without any intervening building to the rolling plains and deep forests of the valley, while on the lower slopes of the other two sides the houses of the village cluster in a crowded semicircle. A brown, well-beaten path leads from this gateway and nearly encircles the hill, about half way up. Other meandering paths wind toward the summit. As one comes through the gate he notices a steep descent to the valley on the left, which is broken only by large masses of flowering elder bushes, while the path is bordered on that side, and to some ex-

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tent held in, by a row of large locust-trees. The steepness of this side is made more abrupt by the encroachment of a quarry into the basaltic pillars of the hill, but the invasion has reached its limit, and the sheer edge is guarded by a railing.

The stone is useful for building, and especially for road-making, and the community of Staufenberg, to which the quarry belongs, would be more than willing to extend this excavation further into the hill. It happens, however, that many years ago, when a few Jewish families were still living in this hamlet, the slope just above the quarry was deeded to them for a cemetery. All the Jews have now left the place, and there is no longer any sign of such use of this property on the grassy and rocky slope, where sheep graze and geese are pastured, and

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where old crones of the village cut fodder for their cattle; but the community is unable to buy back the title, however gladly it would do so, for many times the original price. Not many years ago a well-to-do Hebrew, who lived in America, but was a descendant of the Staufenberg group, put up a monument on the slope, no doubt in order to keep up a claim on the property. Not long afterward, during a bitter anti-Semitic agitation, the monument disappeared between sunset and sunrise, and nobody has ever seen a trace of it since.

Passing the locust-trees we go through a tunnel of overhanging branches—mountain ash and laburnum—and come to a grove of columnar fir-trees, which tower on high in superb aloofness, sending their roots underneath the path, out of which they crop here and there to in-

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vite a careless foot to stumble. Dark masses of moss-covered rock peer out from among deep ferns and green sorrel and glossy English ivy, while from the



DOORWAY OF KIRCHBERG CHURCH

trees comes the trilling of innumerable hidden birds. The paths which lead more steeply to the summit are provided now and then with groups of old stone steps, which shorten the distance. They all converge to a gateway in a thick low wall—plentifully sprinkled with gray moss and delicate ferns—which once made the outer works of the upper castle,

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and following its circuit on a level path we reach a point where it makes a breast-work looking down on a sloping meadow sweet with clover and feathery grasses and buttercups. A few larches and other trees stand about, but there is nothing remaining to show that this was the churchyard of Staufenberg about seventy years ago. Every trace of the unpretentious wooden church has disappeared; the bells now hang in the gate tower, and the little pipe-organ has long since been taken to the church at Odenhausen, a couple of miles away in Prussian territory, while the Staufenbergers now join with the people of four other communities in worshiping in the ancient isolated church of Kirchberg.

The secluded spot reminds us of the days when a village churchyard was often a sort of fortified camp in which the in-

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habitants could take a last stand in case of attack. It is included within the scheme of castle fortifications, which shut it in with zigzag lines, and show a medley of battlements and gateways and arrow slits and holes for boiling tar. Old flights of stone steps, which now lead nowhere, once brought the villagers to their place of worship. From this point we look out indefinitely to the south and east.

When Portia went away the other morning for a tour in the region of the Rhine, we sat on this breastwork and watched her progress in the baker's cart, with its stocky little white horse, as the conveyance shrunk to the size of a nutshell and, apparently moving at a snail's pace, made its way down the high road to the peaceful and secluded village of Mainzlar. There we made out the sta-

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tion at one end of the place, saw the little train upon the branch railway creep down the valley of the Lumda until it halted in the village, and then followed its course for at least five miles as it steamed along, now and then hidden among the folds of the lower hills. While we sat there watching the departing train, the solemn tolling of the bell of the village clock as it struck the hour of nine came sounding up through the fine, pure air, and sensibly heightened our elegiac mood. From this point we saunter by one path or another past the ruin of the retainers' houses and through a portal once surmounted by a tower. This was blown up in 1647, and lies about among the shrubbery in large masses of masonry, which are still held together tenaciously by the original mortar. Then we come out at the top of the

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hill, upon the level terrace which holds the well-preserved but roofless ruins of the ancient castle.

The greater part of the terrace once made a large courtyard, and is now planted with maple-trees, which give a deep shade in the fiercest rays of the mid-day sun. The lower branches are without leaves, while the interlacing crowns of the trees make a solid canopy in the air. One tree, in its eagerness to reach the light, has sent a large branch through a window in the ruin, and projects its mass of green into the interior of the castle itself. In its square inclosure we usually play baseball, if the plain truth must be told. These high walls, which once echoed the sounds of feudal life, now give back the cheerful calls of the American national sport—I hope without desecration.



COURTYARD OF RUINED CASTLE

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We are never too tired to climb the circular steps of the tower, which must be a hundred feet high, from the open top of which we gain the widest view of all, with no obstruction from the Taunus to the Westerwald. One morning we clearly distinguished fifteen different towns and villages. The great firs round about have grown so tall that some of them have had to be cut off from the top, a mutilation much to be deplored.

So much for our usual turn after breakfast. Then we betake ourselves to our several pursuits, which are of a pre-vailingly literary nature. It is incomprehensible how many letters there are to be written, and how they seem to take up more time than there is. About half-past nine the postman climbs up to our hill, and on most days we are fortunate enough to get American letters. From

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general news we are almost entirely cut off. A Frankfort paper (which never, by any chance, contains an item of interest from home) arrives every morning except Monday.

Noon is the hour for formal calls, and was given up to this ordeal until we had gone the prescribed round in the region and in the neighboring university town. An American, if he be like myself, can never quite get over the feeling of incongruity in having to present himself as a stranger in making the first call. The theory is that if you are anybody you will proceed to let it be known by appearing at the homes of those of like station in life, and announcing the fact. Otherwise you are let severely alone. Our range of visits has included the friendly parsonage of the district church, the local physician and teachers, and a few

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families with which we have certain connections from bygone days. It would not be proper to make public the relations of personal friendship, but I can not say less than that we have met with great consideration and with most gratifying manifestations of hospitality and cordiality. Our friends, new and old, have opened the way to many opportunities for social recreation and wider acquaintance, and have been more than willing to help us with suggestions and advice. The chief practical obstacle to keeping up continuous associations lies in the steep height on which our castle is perched.

The trip to lower-lying districts is practicable to most of the party only when we engage a conveyance for each way. As our only local resource lies in the transformed cart of the village baker

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(which makes quite a neat little turnout with its new leather cushions), we have to arrange somewhat in advance so as not to interfere too seriously with the supply of breadstuffs in the adjacent region.

Dinner comes at one o'clock, and is invested with various tokens of formal ceremony. It is always announced by the keeper, who comes up the winding tower staircase for the purpose, and who waits on the table in person. After dinner there seems to be a general inclination to sleep during the heated part of the day, and at four o'clock coffee is served to us on the large center-table of our living room, unless we chance to be invited to afternoon coffee in some delightful garden among our friendly acquaintance in the vicinity. Then there is usually a walk to one of the villages



THE BAKER'S CART

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within reach, or among the harvest-fields, or into the deep forests, or along the edge of the river—the length of the walk depending largely upon the strength of the participants and the heat of the afternoon sun. It always proves worth while, even when undertaken without set purpose. The mere gathering of the wild flowers—corn flowers, poppies, harebells, daisies, and honeysuckles—is sufficient excuse for an afternoon's ramble, and there is always some extra reward thrown in: the discovery of another frescoed house, some carved gateway, a spectacular Hessian costume, a new point of view, the hearing of the lark for the first time as he soars and sings out of sight in the clear sky. Of course we vary our daily routine by longer excursions now and then.

The nearest city is a center from which

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railway lines radiate in all directions, but it does not greatly allure us. As long as we are contented here we let the world go, and indulge the hope that its way will bring sundry of our friends up to us, instead of requiring us to come down to them.

Our tea at seven is taken on the high terrace behind the castle; after this meal we have fallen into the invariable habit of sitting in the deep recess of the west window of our large living room and watching the indescribable glories of the setting sun as it goes down behind the purple hills of the Westerwald. The spectacle is always varied, always unspeakably beautiful, and the hours fly by imperceptibly as we watch its splendors. If Portia or Patty see fit to read from Browning or Tennyson or Richard Burton, it is well and fitting; but there is no

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sense of duty. The red disk of the sun drops behind the rim of the mountains a little after half-past eight; but for an hour afterward the sky is bright and the daylight sufficient for reading. At ten o'clock we reluctantly light the bright lamp on our center-table, and give ourselves to reading, writing, or talking for another brief hour, which closes the day—always too short for realizing what it has brought us.

CHAPTER IV

A Sojourn in Berlin



FTER five years I have come back to Berlin, and find myself completely under its familiar spell. I sympathize with the American girl of sentimental tendencies who wrote home to her parents from Venice, "I was out on the Grand Canal last night, drinking it all in, and life never seemed so full!" The railway journey from Cassel proved unexpectedly remunerative; all the glory of early summer lay upon the country, for the season is belated this year, and resembles May more than June. There was a touch of freshness in

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the air, everywhere calmness, and delight, and charm to the eye. The landscape is harmonized, handled with variety of expression, and treated with faithful and respectful attention. There may be those who deplore such care as tending to unnaturalness. Well, it is with the landscape much as with woman. "Still to be adorned" may drive one to a "delight in disorder"—but one does prefer to have the idol of his heart pay some attention to her personal appearance. Our American countryside has n't made its toilet; it is frowzy. The better results in Germany are due to dividing the surface into small areas, which concentrate the attention of those who till them; this would probably appear fussy and circumstantial to the American farmer. Then there is the permanency of things here: stone bridges, oak tim-

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bers, rows of trees planted for coming generations, civic interest of small villages in their monumental buildings, which they take pride in maintaining in good repair. Field work was in full progress, vegetables were being set, crops hoed and cultivated, hay and green clover being mowed. The women, laboring for the most part upon their knees, made one feel that this nation preserves its landscape better than it does some other values.

The route was along the southern border of the Harz Mountains, where my old friend, the Brocken, lay sulking behind the haze in his customary manner. Our train passed near the Kyffhäuserberg, where the emperor, Frederick Redbeard, is said to be sleeping, waiting for the new glories of the German Empire to arouse him from his subterranean



THE LUTHER MEMORIAL CHURCH, BERLIN

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cavern. The imposing monument on the summit of the mountain trembled through a roseate sunset mist of that light which never was on sea or land. We traversed the "Golden Meadow," a district inexpressibly charming for its fertility, and went through the mining district of Mansfeld, where Martin Luther was brought up by his miner father, and where even the heaps of shale at the mouth of the pits are kept in neat and orderly piles. Then came the monotonous plain of the Elbe, and at midnight we were liberated in Berlin, this great throbbing heart of modern German life. How appreciate and represent it, with all its enormous concentration of wealth and power, and, above all, of talents? There is something about Berlin which imposes upon me as no other cities except London and Paris have ever done.

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Its great organism seems to absorb without compunction whatever comes into its reach, and to be always ready for more. It seems as limitless in its possibilities as the forces of nature, in fact, it seems itself to be an elemental power. It has a festiveness and hilarity which takes it out of the class of Chicago or Washington. Washington has some statelier buildings, but its streets lack the unity of expression which those of Berlin show.

The city gives a unique impression of having thrown away the past completely, and of being in every part modern. A few of its conspicuous public buildings go back to earlier reigns; but everywhere is the pulse of new enterprise, the signs of replacing that which has answered in an earlier generation by that which is the very latest and best. For a number of

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years the great expansion of the city was accompanied by a carnival of barbarously bad taste; it was the heyday of overdone decorations and plaster cornices; but a new spirit has come into its architecture, a spirit which expresses itself in joyous display of power and superabundant luxury, but which at the same time brings to its service a cultured and discriminating taste.

There is something overpowering in the endless succession of enormously long blocks of enormously great houses, each possessing individuality, and each lending its share to produce a concerted whole. I know nothing to compare it with except the effect of our World's Fair in Chicago, where every building represented an original plan, and was, at the same time, in harmony with the general spirit of the affair and subordinate

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to it. A walk, for instance, through the new Luitpold Street, which is, in plain English, an asphalt thoroughfare bordered by apartment houses, reminds me of one of those glorious September afternoons at our exposition, when all the fountains were playing, the flags flying, and the holiday multitude was thronging about the Court of Honor with its palaces and bridges and statues and lagoons, while floods of sunshine from a serene sky brought out all the color and movement of the exhilarating scene. One who saw it might well be content to leave the exhibits to themselves while he watched the kaleidoscopic spectacle. Here, too, the imposing design of each of the stately houses, their relation to the street and to one another, the striking sky-line which the whole group of buildings presents, make an aggregation

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which is prophetic of the city of the future.

Perhaps I am dropping too readily into the somewhat tropical rhetoric of the circus poster; but Berlin furnishes just such impressions. It is a spectacle which "is always going on," and this at the season when nearly all American visitors have betaken themselves to Italy or Switzerland or Austria.

I ought not to give the impression that Berlin weather at this time shows undisturbed serenity; on the contrary, I know no place which packs so many different sorts—rain, sunshine, wind, clouds—into the narrow bounds of one calendar day with such incalculable caprice. In the brightest sunshine, sitting in the shade of the lilacs, you look up toward their dark foliage, and see the slanting rows of falling drops and hear them plashing

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all about you. All meteoric categories have to be revised. Take your umbrella with you, and count every hour of sunshine as so much clear gain.

Of the greatest interest is the new movement in decorative art which has asserted itself all over Berlin, and this within a space of a few years—almost of a few months. It is a long-delayed manifesto of original taste, of the free artistic temperament, against the heaviness and dullness of traditional styles and convention. It comes indirectly from Paris, but by way of Munich, the Jerusalem at which this school tarried until it recruited enough energy to sally forth and capture the metropolis, and for the day it looks as though it were doing this very thing.

Much of what is best in regard to designs of furniture and household articles

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goes back to the school of Ruskin and William Morris in England. As an emancipation from the rococo any movement would be welcome; it is no small service to have opened the eyes of Germany to the revelation that there can be something worth while in architecture and house furnishing and decorative design other than ponderous and florid imitations of the late Renaissance style. Whether the creators of the newer fashion have the virility to lead it on to a progressive development may be doubted. At any rate, the servile and tiresome repetition of its most familiar motives by mere imitators promises in the near future to become far more wearisome than the most constant reiteration of Greek designs could ever be.

Of all the active expressions which this demand for freedom in art has

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brought out, none is more suggestive than the new "Superior Varieties," or "Ueberbrettl," the dramatic enterprise undertaken by Baron Ernst von Wolzogen, a talented and exceedingly untrammelled representative of the latest movement. I visited it a few nights ago. As soon as we entered the hall we were aware that the modern craving for fresh stimulus had been taken into account. The floor is covered with a rich carpet of unique and striking pattern, the chairs, of dull black wood, are a study in original artistic design, and the stage curtain is of heavy velvet in an unconventional pattern of dark, harmonic shades—mostly gray and brown and olive, as I remember.

There was not a single detail in all the items of furnishing and decoration which did not appeal to the eye with a certain

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interest. One felt that the place was dedicated to the recreation of superior people, and that an easy spirit of good understanding prevailed on both sides of the house.

The delightful sense of nonrestraint was heightened by a look at the program, which, instead of containing a set plan for the evening's entertainment, consisted of a full catalogue of the company's repertoire, from which (as the program announced) "a sufficient number of items would be freely selected to fill up the evening."

When the time to begin arrived, Marcell Salzer, a clever Viennese who looks like a young painter or sculptor whom one would be glad to be on good terms with, appeared from between the folds of the velvet curtain and told the audience, in the most conversational way,

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what was to take place, and recommended getting as much entertainment as possible. A good deal of the program was directly from the Parisian cafés, and not startlingly novel in its ideas, though given with decided spirit. The most acceptable performance of all was the reading of a few witty poems by Marcell Salzer, who seated himself with his book behind a little table and proceeded to read, that was all. There was no theatrical costume, and no especial attempt to interpret by gesture.

As far as the whole evening is concerned, the successful demonstration that popular art gains its ends more surely by perfection on a small scale and by intellectual distinction than by lumbering sumptuousness and material effect was encouraging; the total effect less so. The spiritual tone was often cynical and



ROYAL PALACE AND CATHEDRAL, BERLIN

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depressing. When Charlotte Marga, the youngest member of the troupe, a bright, pretty girl, dressed in a costume of modern artistic design which it was an unmixed joy to behold, stood up and sang hard little songs in defiance of social restraints, she was a goodly sight, but the sentiment grated.

Just five minutes before coming to that entertainment it had been my office to break open and read to the Berlin family with which I am staying a letter bearing the device of one of the great hotels in another city. The writer, an animated, highly organized, carefully trained girl, who for many weeks had made the central figure in this home, had just taken her own life. The letter was written by this richly endowed young woman a few minutes before she fired the bullet which entered her heart, and

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was addressed to another intelligent girl of about her own age, though somewhat less favored in fortune and education than herself. "Keep busy," was the last message, "be useful—how small this word has seemed to me all my life! I pushed it aside on each of the few occasions when it troubled me." Perhaps it is no wonder that under the circumstances the smart jests at these homelier virtues failed to delight. And so with the endlessly clever and perfectly acted little Ibsenish comedy given at the end. Three persons were involved—a husband of the higher Prussian official class, educated, punctilious, honorable in his official responsibilities, but, because of his scrupulous fidelity to detail, entirely disliked by his beautiful, spoiled, irresponsible, resourceless wife. The third individual, an elegant, captivating

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young military officer—the old story. The prosaic, almost contemptible appearance which this conscientious, overburdened, somewhat pedantic husband made in direct contrast with the sprightly, saucy intrigue of the other two goodly figures in the play afforded no end of hilarity to the audience, whose sympathies were altogether with the handsome pair; but to me, in my perhaps somewhat morbid mood on that evening, it seemed to offer, underneath its bright and quick situations, the sum of the tragedy of human existence and the very “tears of things.” It was unspeakably painful and bitter. The drama does not need to preach nor to ignore the facts of life; but let it be something more than a demonstration of the wounds of humanity, which groans and travails together in pain until now. Art should

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point out some sign of the better way, some gleam of hope. In upholding the law of beauty, it should not be disloyal to the beauty of law.

Nearly all the Americans have gone to the south or the far north. Ambassador White, whose fineness of nature, long experience, and diplomatic tact have gained the unqualified respect of the highest representatives of German influence, travels back and forth between the capital and his summer home near Dresden. The academic and literary circles are for the most part unbroken. The veteran author, Friedrich Spielhagen, is confined to his home in Charlottenburg by very bad health. As a last item of news, and most novel of all, I remark that I picked up yesterday at a bookstore a new work in German about the United States, which tells the truth

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objectively and in an eminently satisfactory way. I never hoped to live to see the day, but it has come. The excellent little book is called "Characteristic Traits of the American People," and it is by J. Ludwig Neve, of Atchison, Kansas.

CHAPTER V

A Tour of Exploration



THE glorious June days were drawing to their close, and at last came one so fresh and clear that we unanimously resolved that the exploration of the interior regions must be begun in earnest. Our itinerary was planned in such a way as to include the remote villages of Weipoltshausen and Kirchvers, which lie safely tucked away behind the dark ridges of the Prussian Forest. Some years ago, while I was spending a few days at this castle, the school teachers of these quaint hamlets had brought their pupils to visit Staufen-



A HESSIAN VILLAGE

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berg. I have never forgotten the gay costumes which they wore, and had long wished to see the inhabitants of these villages in their native home.

The length of the proposed walk frightened away most of the company; but Portia was unanimously delegated to go with me and to co-operate in collecting specimens, kodak views, and experience. It was already half-past eight when Patty and Miriam waved us farewell from the brow of the hill, and we scrambled down the steep, grassy slope by the basaltic quarry. The Golden Rule for all walking tours is to make a very early start, so as to take every advantage of the freshest part of the day. We were a little too tardy for that; but the tingling air of the hills set our pulses coursing at a lively rate, and each swinging stride along the highway brought a more

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exhilarating sense of being out on the open road, the most generous of all sensations. I carried a knapsack which held some extra wraps, a few breakfast loaves, some twine, a telescope and compass, reading and writing materials, a botanical press, and the official military map of the region, while Portia had charge of the light folding camera. The solidly-built highway which winds easily downward to the edge of the Lahn went among pleasant fields of rye, whose grayish-green surface, mottled with light and shade, undulated in swiftly following waves under the brisk morning breeze. Nearer the river we passed under a sloping bank topped by small cliffs of red sandstone, which bore upon its sides the golden masses of flowering broom.

Just before crossing the arched stone bridge spanning the Lahn we passed the

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red and white post which showed that we had left the jurisdiction of our landlord, Duke Ernst Ludwig, and were entering the old duchy of Hesse-Cassel, now a province of all-absorbing Prussia. We could not keep from perching awhile on the broad stone balustrade of the bridge, watching the swift flow of the rushing river as it swirled past the heavy piers, noticing the large masses of white, star-like flowers growing in its course, and the long, green aquatic grasses which waved and tumbled like the fluttering locks of water nymphs and mermaids.

At the other end of the bridge we came to the village of Odenhausen, and admired the quaintness of line and grouping in its houses and sheds and courtyards. Many of the buildings are painted in bright colors; often the panels between their dark oaken timbers give

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space for conventional decoration in the way of flower pieces or animal figures or homely proverbial mottoes, the hand-work of a very rustic muse. The older inscriptions are carved in beautifully proportioned Gothic letters into the hard beams. They all breathe an edifying combination of piety and hard-headed shrewdness. The carefully and expensively built home, ark of the family fortunes for generations to come, claims the respect which belongs to sacred objects, and bears throughout this region the marks of a religious consecration. The first dwelling which we noticed in Odenhausen bore the motto:

“Hier will ich ein wenig wohnen
Bis mir Gott schenkt die Himmelskrone,”

which is of equal interest for its otherworldliness and its testimony as to dialectic pronunciation.

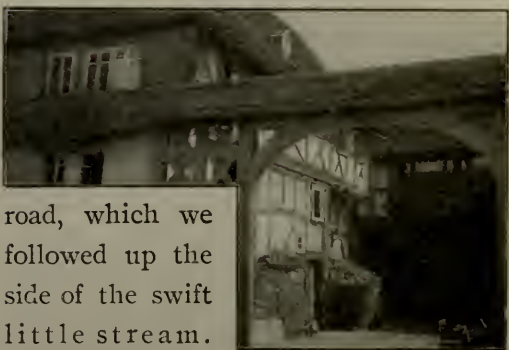
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One house was of an ethereal aquamarine blue, another of a pinkish color, and they were all conducive to heightening the gayety of the most festive of June mornings.

West of the place rises the bare dome of the Alter Berg, easy to climb, and from which there is said to be one of the best all-around views in this neighborhood. We were tempted to turn aside for this opportunity, but pressed on regretfully upon our prescribed course. At the upper end of Odenhausen we were glad to leave the hard glaring regularity of the public "chaussee," and to take a small rambling road across fields and meadows, now and then crossing a little rill by a dark, low-arched stone bridge, stopping to fish for water plants, or to gather the graceful columnar sprays of the large blue harebell, and watching the

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antics of beetles and butterflies or the slow progress of snails and orange-colored slugs at the roadside. After crossing the Salzböde, a brawling tributary of the Lahn, we reached a shady country



road, which we followed up the side of the swift little stream.

Among tall pop-

lars, and surrounded by a thriving garden, stood a romantic mill, and from the lower ground came up the clatter and splashing of its wheel. The further we went, the more picturesque details we encountered. In the village of Salzböde,

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lying in the very heart of the fertile little valley, there was one particularly noticeable group of buildings about a great yard to which a massive gateway of carved timbers served as entrance. It framed a well-lighted picture of the inner court, and as a central figure sat an old peasant woman busied in paring potatoes, which she let fall into a tub.

Portia made up her mind to have this picture in a photograph. It is one of the advantages of the hilly sites of these Hessian communities that you can almost always find some little height from which to point your camera advantageously. While we were getting the range we indiscreetly asked the aged woman whether it would be agreeable to her to have the picture taken, and were put into a somewhat embarrassing position in finding that she neither understood nor trusted

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our motives. A useful working rule proves to be to first take your snapshot, then explain the workings of the machine (which is always received with sympathetic interest), and lastly to ask for permission to take the view. This avoids offense, satisfies all concerned, and leads to excellent results.

Above the village the road divided, the main way following the edge of the wooded hills, which shut in the other side of the rich meadows which cover the floor of the narrow valley. We kept upon the north side, upon a road which soon became hardly more than a lane, entirely overarched and overhung by heavy branches. It was hard to understand how the drivers of carts could make their way through without being swept off by the drooping boughs.

Suddenly I called my companion's at-

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tention to two regular notes, sounding like the faint blasts of elfin horns from the innermost depths of the forest on the right, and introduced her, for the first time, to the call of the cuckoo. "Cuckoo, cuckoo," it sounded out again and again, while from across the valley, out of the woods on the opposite hill, came back the same notes, only at a higher pitch. The surprising similarity of the call to the workings of a Black Forest clock was very impressive to Portia, and for some time she stoutly refused to believe that it could be genuine. "It sounds too natural," she insisted.

The course of each of the swift streams through these hills is thickly beset with mills, and it was only a short distance higher up that we came to the "Schmelz," an important, busy, prosperous-looking group of buildings. By this

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time it was half-past ten, and the desirability of getting a second breakfast was growing more and more evident. We were directed to a garden lying in pleasant seclusion at the side of the mill race, and turned with great relief into its cool and shady precincts. We made our way straight to a rustic table under a big round linden-tree, the branches of which made a perfect canopy of fragrant shade, through which the mild sunbeams stole, and where the birds sported and chirped, while the delicious balmy breeze of the perfect summer morning played about our foreheads, refreshing us after our last strenuous climb.

The heavy knapsack was laid off, and we engaged in friendly conversation with the small group seated under the spreading tree. The rushing little stream was bordered with willows and shut off by

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a graceful rustic palisade, in which were several light gates that could be lifted from their supports by one hand.

After the hostess had searched through all her stores to find something for us to eat, and had found nothing more tempting than smoked ham and rye bread, she went on with preparations for the family dinner, taking a basket of vegetables to the edge of the running brook and deftly washing them by swirling basket and all about in the swift current. The benevolent patriarch of the place, a man with a shrewd, kindly Scotch expression, asked with polite interest about our origin and our aims in the region, while a younger man made inquiries about one of his acquaintances who had gone to America, and was last working (as far as he knew) in a piano factory.

The idyllic values fell a little when the

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younger man got on a bicycle and went down the road—not that there is anything objectionable in the wheel, but it is another one of the modern improvements which does not seem to fit into the quiet, remote old-German landscape. The modern note was atoned for, however, when the benevolent patriarch got into a creaking wagon with ladder-like sides, and drove his team of cows up the hillside. It was too pleasant in this fresh young summer morning, under the round linden, to think of pressing on in haste, and there was, fortunately, no reason for hurrying. It was much better to sit there and take agreeable cognizance of a flowery meadow across the brook, and lazily observe the line of thatched straw beehives under the shade of a group of trees on the other side. A clipper-built, saucy water wagtail flirted

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smartly and daintily upon the stones in the stream, and came near enough to us to satisfy his curiosity as to the strangers.

We must have rested a full hour before I took up the knapsack, and we started for the next village, Reimershausen, which we were told lay up the valley and could not be missed. We crossed the brook by the little foot bridge, went over the meadow past the beehives, and took the road going steeply uphill, as it was the only one to take. We stopped only to notice the dark patches of heather, not yet in bloom, until the road took an unmistakable turn to the east, and brought us to the borders of the district of Cassel, a little matter of three miles and a half from the point at which we had aimed. It is said that General Grant always chose to ride ten miles across country rather than to turn back when

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he had missed his way; but we had planned too long a tour to be able to treat the situation in so grandiose a fashion, and we went back the entire solitary way to the rustic seats under the round linden, where we learned that the road we should have taken was a mere foot-path among the grasses at the very edge of the brook. The path was so pretty that we straightway forgot all vexation at the waste of effort. At times it led through open meadows, but for the most part under tangled branches of hazel and alder, which made a perfect bower of cool shade. At a point where the little stream became boisterous between steep banks of rock in the midst of a dark fir forest, we happened upon the "Rauch Mill," whose noisy, moss-covered wheel was flinging sparkling spray almost at our feet. The mill was not only admirably

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picturesque, as it lay in the cool nook, but profitably didactic in its painted mottoes, one of which might be rendered:

“When day breaks,
Trouble wakes;
With morning fair
Comes new care.”

Here we crossed the rocky little gorge and took a field path to Reimershausen, which stands on a sort of embankment shut in by a high hedge of trees. The midday sun soon began to blaze, and we found the next two miles, upon an unshaded highway, the most difficult part of the day's work. Very grateful we were when we at last reached the little town of Kirchvers. Its narrow, winding streets were for the most part filled with geese and spectacular children in gorgeous chromatic costumes.

The most striking feature of the place is the clumsy little church, with a thick,

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blunt tower which looks like a great thumb pushed up from among the trees. Its massive walls are propped up by heavy stone buttresses, and its crude little biblical and allegorical frescoes are grotesque beyond all power of description. I photographed it from an empty hay wagon at the side of a neat timbered cottage, with steps of well-worn red sandstone, and was watched with interest by a comely young woman in operatic peasant costume, who looked out above the lower half of the divided front door. After some natural feminine protests as to the state of her hair, she was good enough to stand for her portrait, which makes a very characteristic souvenir of our visit. We were sorry to learn that the teachers whom I had met six years ago had long since been transferred to distant scenes of usefulness.

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Our efforts to find anything eatable in the village were entirely unsuccessful, so we decided to climb directly up the steep wooded mountain which separates Kirchvers from the valley of the Lahn. We soon learned, while asking directions, that it is a perilous thing to venture into the great forest, which is a devious labyrinth to those who are not familiar with its complicated trails. After some search a citizen was found who consented to lead us through the woods to a point where the way was clearly marked, and under his guidance we climbed up the steep mountain side.

We went on and on through great quiet halls of shade, where many deer were roaming, and into which the sunlight hardly made its way. The towering trees rose to such a height that no vegetation could grow upon the ground,

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which was covered with dead leaves, and showed every curve of the deeply undulating surface. Through various tracts of beeches and oaks and pines and firs we went, until we at length reached one of the trails marked by the Giessen Outing Society, which has humanely painted red crosses upon trees and rocks so as to show the path unmistakably. Here we took leave of our guide, and presently came to an isolated beech-tree of colossal girth and height. Its silvery roots were cushioned with velvety green moss, and offered us a comfortable resting-place, where we sat and devoured dry crusts of bread with much satisfaction. From this point the red crosses brought us by many windings and through the most varied scenes safely across the new stone bridge at Ruttershausen and into the flowery inn-garden at Kirchberg,

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where, amid roses in tropical profusion, and in full view of our castle upon its hilltop, we feasted upon coffee and omelettes with a contentment of which Omar Khayyam never dreamed.

CHAPTER VI

Visitors from Home



HIS inexhaustible castle has yielded us a brand new experience, for we have offered its hospitalities to three delightful visitors who were good enough to come to us here—the Matron, the Daughter, and the Friend. As Portia is nearly related to the Matron, she was delegated to meet the newly-landed travelers at Cologne, and lead them safely to this remote spot. Our advance agent left us with mingled feelings of joy and grief; the joy was self-explanatory, the grief betokened the approaching disintegration of our compact

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little party of four. On our side we felt, perhaps, some little touch of envy, for the Matron travels "en prince," while we have to choose rather exclusively between eating the cake and having it. A day or two later we got tidings from our delegate of the gay doings in the great world outside, supplemented by a series of adorable telegrams, begging us to come down and be treated to concerts, dinners at the Palm Garden, divine service in the French Church, and other like luxuries; but we remained firmly on our rocky height. We have come to love not man the less, but nature more, from these our interviews in Staufenberg. On the appointed day I led the baker's cart and the ox-wagon to Lollar, to meet the newcomers, and found them, to my surprise, sitting about in the waiting-room, for they had taken one train too early,

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and had nothing to do until the conveyance appeared. It also turned out that our advance agent had been desperately homesick to get back upon this hilltop ever since she had been away.

Our guests were welcomed with all the affection which exiles can feel for those who come directly from the home-land, and who stand for all that is dearest there. They found their rooms bright with American flags, and decked with the gay wild flowers and varied grains which abound in these parts. As soon as wraps were disposed of and trunks brought up and opened, there ensued a distribution of rich and rare gifts, for our good visitors had had us in mind, not only when sailing from New York, but in Rotterdam and Cologne and Frankfort. We were showered with all sorts of generous remembrances, not to

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omit especial mention of the gastronomic spoils which were to enrich our somewhat Spartan table for many days—chocolate and American confectionery, marmalade, and a magnificent hamper of fresh fruit. Verily these true friends knew well on what side they could appeal to our most grateful sensibilities! I had never before experienced such Christmas sensations at this period of the calendar year.

We next piloted them through all the upper chambers of the castle and out upon the battlements, after which it was time for supper on the high terrace. How friendly and sociable was the large party of seven around the evening table, and what torrents of talk from every side! The fact which struck me most forcibly was that our questions were so seldom in regard to those daily happen-

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ings which fill a large part of the indispensable newspaper, but had so much to do with psychological values. After supper we marched to the top of the high tower in the castle ruin, and gained a view which was highly remunerative for our visitors and, perhaps, more so for ourselves, who have already come to know and love every separate feature in the wide panorama of our landscape. The inevitable twilight vigil in the western window-seat made the suitable close to a most satisfactory afternoon. While we had supposed that the window room was just the right size for four, we found it none too contracted for seven. It was only necessary to put a chair into the broad middle space. The good Matron took her seat, her two happy daughters grouped themselves effectively on either side, "praising God with sweetest looks,"

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while the golden sky poured its peaceful glow over a scene which left nothing to desire.

Our rooms had been arranged for four tenants. With the best will in the world it was not practicable to adjust them to a party of seven, so I was told off to spend the nights in the house of one of the citizens of Staufenberg. I was glad enough to have the opportunity of seeing something of the inner appointments of one of these typical, well-to-do homes. The house, barns, and hayloft are grouped on three sides of a large paved square, which holds farm implements, empty wagons, and a mountainous pile of firewood. I was lighted with an old-fashioned pewter candlestick up the little staircase to the chief room, which took up the entire width of the house. All the woodwork was fresh and spot-

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less; the floor was made of well-painted boards, at least a foot and a half broad. The ceiling was high, and the walls newly-papered in a tasteful design.

The room was abundantly furnished, and had upon one wall a quaint cupboard filled with old decorated china and glass; at one side stood a treasure of an old brown carved spinning-wheel, still in constant family use. The little square-paned windows opened inward on hinges; into the one at the head of my bed a thriving walnut-tree in the garden kept trying to thrust its branches. The lace curtains were drawn together and separated by that ingenious system of weighted cords and rings which prevails in Germany, a land where things are usually not ingenious, but clumsy. I suppose I have spent hours in this country in pulling lace curtains together and



INTERIOR OF KIRCHBERG CHURCH

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parting them, for pure joy in the mechanism. The bed was built up to an incredible height by various mattresses and feather cushions, and as I sank into its sheets of firm homespun linen I felt that one must have a far worse conscience than myself not to be able to sleep soundly in such a place. Perhaps I gave my conscience too high a credit, or, perchance, it was the faulty tendency of all the mattresses to slide off in one direction, which accounts for the five rather restless nights I spent in this excellent home.

The next day was Sunday. In special tribute to our honored friends, it was indeed most fair, most calm, most bright, the very bridal of the earth and sky. Our stiff little pew in Kirchberg church could not contain the whole company, which was distributed into various seats

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of unvarying discomfort. After service we wandered about the shady, fragrant churchyard, saw the old inscriptions and other traces of pre-Reformation times, and strolled slowly up the hill before the heat of the day became burdensome. On the shady terrace we found several acquaintances from the nearest town, and there was a blessed big mail from home, so that the hours before dinner went by quickly. In the afternoon the cause of international amity was again furthered by visits of German friends.

After our guests had gone, and the evening meal had been quietly enjoyed, it was natural that a quartet of younger members of the party should betake themselves to the open top of the high tower and, just as the sun disappeared behind the hills, should sing the good old hymns consecrated by the precious asso-

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ciations of numberless Sunday evenings elsewhere—"Now the Day is Over," "Shining Shore," "Ancient of Days," and the rest. My chief complaint about our doings here is that the breaking off comes so soon and is so hard, and our sunset quartet was no exception.

On Monday morning we divided our forces. It had been decreed some days before that we Americans were in duty bound to make some social return for the many hospitalities which had been lavished upon us in this region. Invitations had already been sent out for an American afternoon tea at the castle on Tuesday. The younger people were dispatched to the nearest city to make the last purchases in preparation for this affair, while the elders remained at home and matured plans. The afternoon was made memorable by a grand tour in a

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stout break, capable of holding all our number and driven out from the city for our uses.

We started at half-past three, and were soon in the awesome solitude of the great pines and beeches in the Prussian forest across the Lahn. At one point we dismounted and picnicked, while our driver did his best to keep the horses from being annihilated by the swarms of vicious flies which haunt the woods. Then we descended by steeply winding roads to the green valley back of Odenhausen, and came by difficult ascents, during which the most of us were glad to walk and thus show mercy upon our faithful beasts, over the wooded top of another large hill, and then by hazardous slopes over a billowy red road to the hamlet of Fronhausen.

I have seen villainous roads in Amer-

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ica, but for a surface which could throw each of the four wheels of a carriage in different ways this can not be outdone.

At Fronhausen is a phenomenal linden-tree, consisting of three immense stems partially grown together, the whole making a colossal unit. Rough pacing made its circumference at the ground measure nearly forty feet.

As we rode home, the level highway leading down the valley of the Lahn was shaded by the western hills, and the scene was one of unmarred pastoral beauty. Loaded wains returning from the hay fields carried happy groups of peasant girls, some of them in the brightest of gowns and gayest of head-dresses. It is little wonder that we were seized by the lyric mood, and that our Smith College girls provoked us to daring alternations in impossible verse.

FROM BROOM TO HEATHER

Tuesday, the day set apart for German-American social relations, dawned clear and hot. From breakfast time on there was much stir in the tower room below stairs; a making of lettuce sandwiches, a pressing of organdie gowns, and what not. It was my office to walk through the blazing heat of midday to Lollar, to try to replace a certain piece of Swiss cheese which had been bought in the provincial capital, but had proven unavailable. Another complication arose when it was found that the resources of the province were inadequate to producing one bottle of olives. These unforeseen obstacles were but a spur to American inventiveness, which scored a conspicuous triumph by robbing the candy which had been brought from Frankfort, in order to get walnuts for the sandwiches. My four miles' walk through



THE RETURN AT EVENING

FROM BROOM TO HEATHER

the hot sun was a failure, for there were only two sorts of cheese in stock to choose from, the "handcheese" of the peasants, and Limburger—neither of which counts, I am told, in getting up an American afternoon tea. I did find one fresh lemon, though, and brought that back as a welcome peace-offering. Then I was deputed to go into our woods on the hillside, and rob their mossy slopes of some long trailing vines of glossy English ivy, which were used to trim everything in our large living room. The two red screens, adorned with American, Imperial German, and Hessian emblems, not only made an effective decoration, but completely hid both beds in the corner.

At three o'clock I descended the hill again to meet our guests, who were to come by train. There was an elderly

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merchant with his animated daughter, a delightful professional family, a young university scholar with his charming wife, a lawyer, a genial pastor with wife and sister, and several miscellaneous friends. Some of the elder guests were sent up in the jaunting-car, while the rest of us climbed the slope.

The picture made by all this goodly group in our large room, the young women attired in their prettiest thin white summer dresses, was adequately festive. One of the keeper's large round tables had been set in a corner, plentifully decked with ivy and fresh flowers, and here one of the young American ladies "poured"—how many home memories cluster around that sacred word!

The two matrons, neither of whom could directly understand the other's language, were given places of honor upon

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the ceremonial sofa, and coffee and sandwiches were passed around the large circle, the members of which, even those who controlled only one idiom, did their best to show their mutual goodwill. A large collection of kodak pictures, in which we have indulged riotously upon this expedition, spoke in a universally understood language, and helped in getting things agreeably started, while the interpreters wandered from group to group with mediatory intent. When we went in a body to the old ruin, and formed various groups at the dictation of our photographers, the spirit of hilarity grew, and from here we strolled across the little shaded lawn to the old ramparts, where some of us sat in a long line, eating cherries and discussing ethics, politics, and the higher criticism, and the rest fell into congenial smaller

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groups. I have noticed, even among the Germans, a tendency to foregather in pairs, under certain conditions.

At six o'clock we returned in merry mood to the large room, and shared in the crowning achievement of the festivity—a stately pyramid of ice-cream—which had cost the keeper a special expedition to town that day, and the successful serving of which filled him with legitimate pride. As the time for the eight o'clock train to the city drew nearer, I piloted the guests through labyrinthine lanes out upon the main high-road, and our international party came to an end in a blaze of glory, to which the setting sun contributed its own appropriate share of splendor. That same night a wonderful party of purple-capped Marburg students was good enough to take supper on a back terrace, and to add

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to the gayety of nations by singing, which fitted well into the spirit of the day.

The short remainder of our friends' visit flew by all too swiftly, and we gave up, once for all, the hope of exhausting the possibilities of the region for their benefit. Among other things, we did make an expedition to a popular fair in a neighboring town, which brought together a diverse assemblage of peasants in marvelous, varied costumes; where we had our fortunes told, and bought fruit and baskets and peasants' chinaware. Then, again, by the especial kindness of the Burgomaster of Staufenberg we were allowed to rummage among the ancient documents locked away in the town hall, and to climb by well-worn stairs and rickety ladders up through the gloomy interior of the city tower, reading the terse inscriptions on the ancient bells.

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When not sight-seeing we were more than content to sit about indefinitely under our lindens, swapping sonnets and eating fruit. The parting came, but I do not enjoy writing about that. As the express train rushed past, more than half a mile away, Patty and I stood on the top of the corner turret and waved the great Hessian standard belonging to the castle. The heavy pole is twelve feet long, and the flag large in proportion; but we shook it out with a royal will, confident that its gay red and white must make a brave show against the dark background of castle and hill. Sure enough we were straightway answered by handkerchiefs and American flags fluttering from the window of the train, but we were in a very mournful frame of mind as the train sped away to the north-east.



A VETERAN REUNION

CHAPTER VII

Hessian Life and Customs



IT is doubtless time that I should begin some account of the daily life and habits of our new neighbors, the Hessian people. A thoroughly sympathetic treatment of their industrious ways and sterling character can be found in the short novels of Herr Alfred Bock, of Giessen, who combines in one person the energetic director of a large manufacturing establishment and an author whose works of fiction are highly praised by such authorities as Paul Heyse. Here is a community in absolute connection with the soil, for there

FROM BROOM TO HEATHER

is practically no industry in this place of some seven hundred and fifty souls except farming, nor could a more prosperous-looking or fruitful region be imagined.

Throughout the miles and miles of country upon which I look down at this moment from the deeply-set castle window, there is not one waste or neglected spot. The land is successfully tilled to the very edge of the roads and forests, up the high slopes of the hills, and upon their summits, and cared for with evident pride and with the most intelligent foresight for the future. The progressiveness of the farmers and their practice of scientific methods in the treatment of the soil, has been a revelation. The Hessian Government provides free lectures on scientific farming, which are well attended by the landowners, and which

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have had such direct and practical results that the productiveness of the land has been vastly increased during recent years. The most enlightened care is given to the rotation of crops, to fertilization, and the care of the land.

Formerly a good many fields were accessible only by the sufferance of a man's neighbors, and could be planted only with crops that could be gathered without inconvenience to either party, but the government has put through a new survey and distribution of fields, whereby every patch now has an open field road at each end. Most of the land is divided into narrow, rectangular strips, with varied crops, so that the surface of the country looks like a patchwork quilt. By far the greater part of the fields is given up to "corn;" that is to say, rye. Next, I should judge, come potatoes,

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which grow here in the greatest perfection, unmolested by our ubiquitous "potato bug." Oats, wheat, and barley are also grown, clover, hay, and rutabaga. In and immediately about the village are small fenced gardens and orchards, where table vegetables and flowers grow in abundance, and the fields are dotted here and there with smaller orchards or detached trees.

The splendid highways are bordered on either side by a row of apple-trees, which belong to the government and are leased each year to individuals. The valley adjoining the river, as well as considerable slopes upon the hillsides, is given up to meadows of hay, of which there are two crops. The immense stretches of forest (communal or State property) yield their wood lavishly for fuel and building purposes, and where



HARVESTING RYE

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the soil is too stony for sheep pasturage there are quarries of sandstone and basalt.

From our high windows it is perfectly easy to follow the entire activity of the community in the fields, especially with the help of a good fieldglass, a gift of Evanston students in years gone by. The strictest care extends to each process; when the farmers plow they draw the furrows straight and even; when they plant and till they put as much conscience into the work as though it were artistic landscape gardening. The harvesting operations began upon green clover, which was brought in in wagonloads and fed to the cattle, after having been chopped up with straw. Toward the end of June came the first crop of hay. The whole community lay for a time in a state of siege, for the hay has

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to be cut, for the most part, at sunrise, and by half-past two in the morning the mowers were at work in the fields, the men with scythe, the women kneeling and cutting the grass with sickles. During this strenuous period all other industries were more or less suspended. The hay is not stacked, but brought in wagons to the great lofts, which are an indispensable part of each household. Some of the older homes are so built that the only entrance to this "Scheune" is through the front door, and the loads of hay have to be taken through the kitchen. The newer lofts are larger, occupying one side of the square courtyard, with broad doors, large enough to take in a loaded wagon.

On July 16th enterprising farmers began to attack the great crop of standing rye; within a few days this principal har-

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vest will be begun all along the line, although it is just now interrupted by rain. It is a time of all-around hard work. From every courtyard comes up the clink of hammers beating the scythes sharp upon anvils. In all the region round about I have not seen one reaping machine, though I hear that they have begun to be introduced upon the larger estates. The narrow strips of field are usually attacked co-operatively by all the members of a family above school age, and very often a member considerably below that age toddles about in the stubble or is camped out upon a sheaf of rye and bidden to amuse itself there. The father wields the broad, short scythe, which carries a bent screen of wire netting, dealing gentle, almost affectionate strokes at the stalks, which are made to lie at a uniform slant against the stand-

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ing grain. The other members of the family follow, some gathering the stalks into bundles with the help of a sickle, and binding them very low down, so that the sheaves remind one of a small boy wearing a Russian belt. The sheaves are grouped by tens into a conical stack, upon which some prudent husbandmen put an eleventh inverted capsheaf, as a protection against rain. The stacks are built up very neatly and disposed at regular intervals along one side of the cleanly mown strip. At noon the school-girls are often to be seen walking arm in arm to the fields, taking dinner to the laborers there, the whole picture having such idyllic simplicity and charm that it makes one feel that all city life is a delusion and a snare.

Only a few years ago all the grain was beaten out by hand, and each of the older



BACK FROM THE FIELDS

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houses has still its threshing-floor, while the heavy flails, like ancestral armor, are still hanging in the halls, a memorial of more laborious times. Now the steam thresher makes its rounds, and the flail has gone the way of the spinning-wheel, which way the scythe is surely destined to follow in the near future.

Every citizen owns his land, and the distribution of property, though not uniform, is free from glaring inequality. By the Hessian law each child is given an equal share of the father's property, so that the land is split up into a countless number of small holdings. A good result of this distribution is that every owner is encouraged to thrift, and has an ambition to add to his possessions, piece by piece. As a rule the young men marry by about the age of twenty-five, and found their own homes. In the

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Prussian region near by the oldest son inherits all the land and holds the property together, while the other children are given some compensation in money. As a consequence the younger sons usually remain on the farm unmarried, and there is a constant tendency to unsettled social conditions.

Within the precincts of the snug village life moves on in a very orderly fashion. The place is not now quite as compact as it was in the Middle Ages, when gray stone walls, which can still be traced by considerable remains, stretched down from the castle at the hilltop and embraced all the hamlet within their circuit. The clock in the gateway tower strikes each hour, and a bell is rung at regular times during the day; first at seven o'clock in the morning, at which hour the schools begin, having their ses-

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sion until eleven, and from one to three in the afternoon. At ten o'clock the bell sounds out over the fields, the survival of a mediæval usage whereby work was suspended for prayers at that time of day. The present generation is no longer so devout; but the bell still rings as of old. On certain days the bell is sounded at about eight o'clock in the evening, and the "town servant" then meets representatives of different homes in the place, and assigns by lot the hours for the free use of the public bakehouse. This is a stone structure, well supplied with openings to let out smoke, having racks and tables for loaves and pans, and containing at one end the huge cavernous stone oven, capable of doing at one time all of a family's baking for three weeks. Each family brings its fresh loaves and bundles of fagots. These latter are burned

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briskly in the stone oven itself, until the proper heat has been gained, when the glowing coals are all scraped out of the oven, and the whole batch of bread is put in upon the ashy floor and duly baked. About fourteen families can use the oven each day.

At sunset on Saturday the entire peal of four mellow bells sounds abroad to welcome the incoming day of rest, which is greeted in the same way on Sunday morning. A bell also rings in preparation for the Church service at half-past nine.

There are two schoolhouses, solidly and expensively built and admirably maintained. Each is in charge of a teacher who lives with his family in the building, and is a personage of dignity and rank. Every child must attend school from the age of six to fourteen,



PUBLIC BAKEHOUSE AT MAINZLAR

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and on reaching the latter age the youth of both sexes is taken, by a rather mechanical process, into the State Church. For three years more, from fourteen to seventeen, the boys are required to attend night school about three times a week during the winter months. After this they are free from school duties, and no further instruction is provided in the place.

I shall not describe the system of education, but will mention just one enviable feature: the pupil who recites is made to give his answers or demonstrations boldly and with full exercise of lung power, so that he almost shouts, a first-rate thing for the expression of personality, a matter which the American public school sometimes slights. If our young people were taught earlier to use that matchless organ of expression, the

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human voice, we should suffer less from that deprecatory, take-the-back-seat air of diffidence in all matters belonging to intellectual and scholarly values.

The public manners of the people are carefully, almost oppressively polite. The men always take off their hats in meeting strangers, and every child in the village has been taught the duty of saluting the passing visitor with "Guten Tag!" so that our progress through the streets is vocal with their high-pitched greetings.

As has been intimated, the better homes are rather imposing establishments, grouped on three sides of a large paved square, which holds great piles of beechwood (brought from the forest in noble pieces and easily split while fresh) and bundles of fagots. The houses stand on solid stone foundations, and have



SCHOOL-CHILDREN AT STAUFENBERG

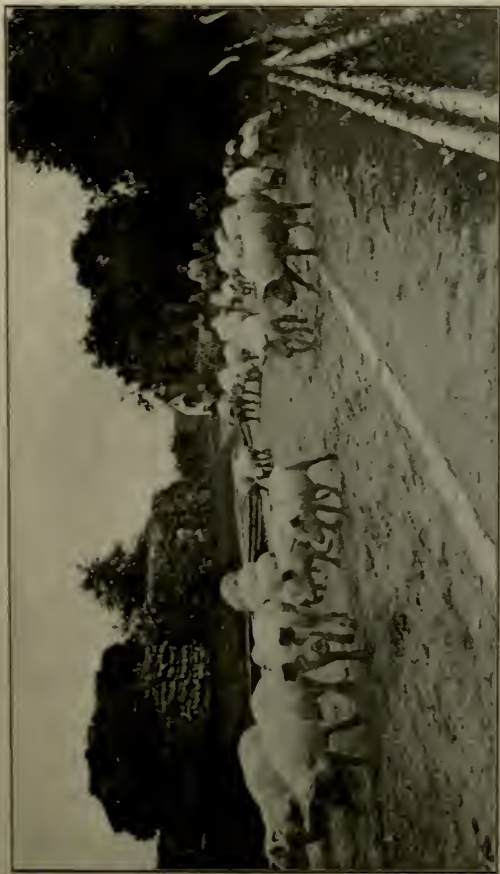
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staircases of stone, often built massively with vaulted masonry. The older houses are framed together of heavy oak beams, bearing carved inscriptions; some of the less solid buildings show ancient wattled work of woven wooden splints filled in with clay. The newest houses are of a white artificial stone, made of gravel held together by lime and molded into large bricks. Lanterns project at the corners. Little shelves, supported on iron brackets in front of the windows, hold flowering plants. Before many of the houses roses clamber up from a single tall stem and blossom freely, or grapevines cover a large part of the front. The stone basement is usually given up to stalls for cattle, particularly for the cows, which are practically the only draft animals in the place, and equally useful for the milk and butter which they supply. They are

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tended with a care which reminds one of the precepts of the Hindu religion. The numerous chickens in every household occupy an upper story in the stone basement, to which they gravely mount by an outside ladder of perhaps twenty rounds.

The barn has for its chief feature a great door of hardwood, unpainted, dark with age, curiously and artistically built of very heavy timbers. In this door is a small postern, also built with care and design. Above the whole is a projecting porch to shelter ladders, poles, and hay-racks. Grouped upon the front of the building are the rakes, scythes, chains, and harnesses of the place, and all about stand tubs, wagons, plows, and the like. Live stock of all sorts except horses abounds, and seems at times a little too much in evidence. Goats and pigs and



THE AFTERNOON PROCESSION

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geese make a part of every well-ordered household, and their care claims no little attention. At five o'clock in the afternoon the communal swineherd winds his trumpet through the lanes and from stall and courtyard, like Hussars at the sound of the assembly call, come trooping out the pigs by scores, old and young, blond and mottled. The driver, who wears a short blue blouse and is one of the most marked and versatile characters in the place, is well aware of his importance. He has a military air, and when not blowing his horn or cracking his long whip is usually engaged in "jollyng" the people along the way. He is preceded by his infant son, who cracks his own little whip with such strength as he can summon. The pigs are driven out to an old quarry for a couple of hours' exercise and fresh air, and then returned to the town

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to the stirring notes of the horn. The sheep remain afield all summer, in charge of a professional shepherd, who, with the help of two rather wild black dogs, keeps the flock within bounds and plants hurdles around it for the night, when the shepherd sleeps near by in his long box on wheels. The geese are parceled out among the girls, who keep them in the fields during the day.

Very few trades are followed, and their representatives are also busily engaged in farming. The multifarious night watchman, swineherd, and bellringer has a sign upon the front of his house: "Hair-cutting and Shaving." Two blacksmiths, a baker, a tailor, a shoemaker, and some carpenters are to be found, but most mechanical help is got from without. There is no regular post-office, as the mail is sent up twice a day from Lollar, and de-



A GOOSE GIRL

FROM BROOM TO HEATHER

livered in the homes. There are no shops, properly so-called. A few houses boast a sort of store in one of the front rooms, tended by the housewife when she is not afield, where a few groceries and simple supplies can be bought. One such home bears an inscription, "Bottled Beer, Tobacco, and Writing Materials." A general co-operative store is conducted with an inn, but goods can be sold only to members of the association.

Perhaps the most interesting feature of life here is its socialistic organization. In addition to enterprises which are public with us—waterworks, roads, schools—the local authorities direct others, such as the bakehouse, the quarry, the breeding of live stock, and the care of cattle. An immense tract of valuable forest belongs to the community, and almost entirely eliminates the burden of direct tax-

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ation by the large revenue which it furnishes.

I must not fail to mention the cemetery, lying on a slope just outside the village, in the midst of orchards and gardens. A low, broad-topped stone wall surrounds it, almost hidden by clambering brambles and thickets of wild roses. Near the center towers up a symmetrical linden-tree, which seems to take the whole place under its protection. On the graves grow old-fashioned garden flowers in fullest perfection: phlox, snapdragon, pinks, columbine, and gillyflower. The walks are bordered with glossy hedges of slow-growing box. The cemetery is always a quiet, undisturbed retreat in which to sit and muse over endless unwritten "elegies."

CHAPTER VIII

At the Water Cure



OUR harmonious party had become very much scattered. One of the number had already been lured away to make the Grand Tour of Italy and other foreign parts with indulgent relatives; another felt constrained to settle down in a small academic center and improve her mind by the systematic study of the German language, while, as a last blow, a famous specialist had sent a third member of our group to Salzschlirf, a remote watering-place near Fulda. This recently developed resort is one whose star is just now

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very much in the ascendant, although as lately as 1888, the time when it was visited and described by the celebrated court preacher, Emil Frommel of Berlin, it was spoken of by him as a spot completely hidden from human ken. Patty and myself were still occupying the castle as its sole residents, and the time was by no means heavy upon our hands; but we suddenly conceived the idea of searching out Salzschlirf. Earlier experiences at larger and more showy watering-places, notably at Carlsbad, had given us a robust prejudice against the whole institution, and we felt that it was due to our estimate of the German people, who set such store upon the system, and claim to be so miraculously made over by it, that we should not go back to America without getting acquainted with one typical specimen.

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Like most of the best plans in European travel, it was made on the spur of the moment, and before we could quite realize the fact we were seated in an express train which was plunging into pine forests and flying at a mad rate up the Vale of Buseck. At half-past four in the afternoon we get off at the station of Salzschlirf, lying in Prussian territory, among the volcanic masses of the Vogelsgebirge, the most considerable basaltic eruption in Germany. A youth from the hotel where our companion was staying stood waiting for us; he brought grateful messages from the patient, who had been told by telegraph that we were coming, and guided us to the place. A long cinder path wound down from the station to the floor of the valley, where the old characteristic Catholic hill village stands side by side with the mod-

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ern group of villas and hotels which has grown up about the springs. The old village is conspicuous for its Roman church and its Alpine-looking cluster of houses. It has a number of communistic possessions, among them a great forest, much arable land, and an inn.

This secluded valley was made by Providence as a sheltered, undisturbed retreat for those who need quiet and restoration. It lies at the very bottom of a towering amphitheater of fir-covered mountains, shut off from the rough blasts that come out of the deep gorges of the neighboring ranges, so that the climate is much milder than that of the surrounding country. At the same time the valley is open to a constant circulation of light breezes by the passage of three streams, which make their way among mountains. A cheerful little

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river, the Altfell, runs through the main part of the valley, joins the Lauterbach coming in from the west, and these unite to form the much broader Schlitz, the stream which made this region famous, and which flows out toward the north-east.

A short distance from the station we entered the maze of winding paths which leads through the fascinating park surrounding the springs, and which holds the chief buildings devoted to guests. Finally we crossed the Altfell on a curved wooden bridge bordered by long boxes of flaming nasturtiums and sweet-peas, and made our way by a narrow brown path and upon rustic steps up a steep Alpine meadow, covered with bluebells and clover, to our hotel, which from its platform on the edge of the dark fir woods commands the whole panorama

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of the secluded valley and its encircling rampart of hills. It seemed very much like the earlier days at the castle when we met our exile, looking wonderfully better for her treatment and overjoyed at our unexpected visit. The hotel was very liberally furnished and well managed, and we found it most satisfactory.

Salzschlirf made easy captives of us from the first, and we hated to be driven away from it, even to go back to our castle. Its sweet, caressing air, overflowing everything in mild floods and at the same time tonic and pungent with the fragrance of the pine forests, is balm for every nerve, and makes those sleep who never slept before.

The clear running streams give life and movement, and every desire of the jaded visitor seems to have been anticipated in such a way as to offer the maxi-



THE VILLAGE OF SALZSCHLIRF

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imum amount of genuine comfort with the minimum amount of fuss. We were not especially ambitious visitors as regards pursuing a systematic cure—perhaps chiefly because we had nothing that needed curing—but the spirit of the place, the inducements which it offers to self-surrender, are irresistible and an unspeakably blessed boon.

The first thing you do is to pay the “bath tax” of fifteen marks, which entitles you to the use of the springs, the grounds, and the other institutions; then you call upon Sanitary Counselor Dr. Gemmel, chief physician of the baths, or some other practitioner. You do well to bring with you a technical description of your “case,” written by your home doctor. Very careful directions as to diet and exercise are given you, and the number and sort of baths to be taken are

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exactly noted. The physician probably orders you to drink about four glasses of the Boniface spring daily. The springs flow from six to nine in the morning, from eleven to twelve at noon, and from five to seven in the evening; the morning potion must be taken before eating, say at seven o'clock. Fifteen minutes must be allowed for each glass, which one sips while strolling up and down among the groves and flower-beds. After two glasses, another half-hour's walk, and then the belated breakfast. During the morning a bath of mineral water in one of the bathhouses, then the patient goes to bed, but not to sleep, for about an hour. At one o'clock, dinner; from five to seven, promenade, with bed at about nine.

The chief of the six springs, the Boniface, flows in a little temple at the end

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of the broad gravel walk. Every guest searches out his own numbered glass from the hundreds in the racks, and it is filled by one of the young women who minister at the fountain. The water contains much salt, and leaves a slightly bitter flavor in the mouth, but is rather palatable than otherwise, having no odor and being saturated with carbonic acid gas.

At the early hour of half-past six the excellent orchestra began to play in the promenade, opening the day with the sustained, organ-like harmonies of an ancient Lutheran choral, which never sounds more stately or convincing than in the freshness of the pure morning air. During the morning walk the orchestra continues to play, and performs also at four and at eight. My own theory is that this soothing and exhilarating feature

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of daily life has about as much to do with the benefit of the cure as the percentage of lithium in the water or the number of peat baths taken. I could not help envying the musicians the satisfaction of knowing that every performance means better health for one's afflicted fellow-men. Perhaps our municipalities will some day provide an early promenade upon shady paths to the sound of good music for all their inhabitants, whether afflicted with rheumatism or not. Think how it might sweeten the subsequent transactions of the business office or the Board of Trade!

The hundreds of guests stroll up and down with more or less gouty tread, for all degrees of lameness are represented; yet the atmosphere is, on the whole, a cheerful one, and the general tone one of good-will and entire unconstraint. Even

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the gorgeously militant gendarme counts it no robbery to be seen quietly smoking a little on the side. Those who prefer to do so, circulate about in the long-paved corridor, under the roof of which are neat booths for the sale of glassware, crystals, linen, books, and the inevitable pictured postcards. Peasants from the neighboring villages are among the number, as well as nobles; the atmosphere is one of quiet refinement, though there is the greatest variety in the types which parade during the morning and evening hours — dowagers, professional men, merchants, women of fashion, and slender, highbred officers who have the confident air of those unto whom belong the earth and the fullness thereof.

The perfectly-kept lawns and parterres lead into a winding labyrinth of paths, which go up the side of the mountain

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into the deep woods upon its top. Everywhere are secluded benches ready for occupancy, or shady arbors and nooks commanding wide views. There is a constant incitement and allurements to longer and more ambitious walks, and from each prospect gained there is some new path for conquest, marked out by easily-followed symbols painted upon trees and rocks.

Every influence is exerted to have the day end early, and after ten o'clock nothing is doing; the cool hours from eight to ten are among the most festive of the day. The parks along the river are brightly lighted by electricity; upon the broad veranda of the Kurhaus or at tables upon the ample terrace in front of it or in a sheltered pavilion near by sit smart groups of guests, and the orchestra renders its most ambitious selec-

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tions from Wagner and Strauss. As an American, I felt great satisfaction in hearing the lively strains of Sousa's "Washington Post" among these numbers, though it was pretty well disguised under its printed title, "La Posta di Washington." Very often evening concerts or theatrical performances of a mildly exciting type are given for the entertainment of guests.

During the remainder of our visit there were plenty of diversions to fill up the short hours—excursions to the quaint town of Schlitz; to Fulda, with its venerable history and monuments; to Lauterbach and the fine old castle of Eisenbach. There were tennis and bowling and croquet, boating on the Lauter, and (if our ambition had reached so far) opportunities for fishing and hunting.

The bathing arrangements claim a

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large share of time and interest. With the rapidly increasing attendance every room is engaged throughout the bathing hours; unless one is punctual he loses his chance for the day. After getting a stamped card one has to wait in a reading-room until his number is called. Three-quarters of an hour is allowed as total time for the use of a room, which includes all the preparations for the bath and getting dressed afterward. The bathing houses and pumping works are built according to a sort of factory style, and I have observed that the Germans are not much more æsthetic than ourselves in the forms of commercial architecture. The baths are taken in large enameled tubs, each of which has a false bottom of perforated wood, under which is situated a steam coil. The direct heating of the water in a boiler would have

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the effect of driving out the carbonic acid gas, which has so agreeable effect upon the system in bathing. It was in Salzschlirf that the method of heating mineral water baths by means of contact with steam-pipes was discovered as early as 1840, and it is now almost universally used at such places. The body of the bather becomes immediately covered with countless silvery bubbles, which give a very agreeable and stimulating sensation. The stirring and tonic effect which these baths have upon the circulation makes them unadvisable for persons who suffer from heart troubles—speaking rather from the physiological than from the psychological standpoint.

A new spring has just been opened by boring at a point indicated by Professor Lepsius. This spring yields a water most desirable for bathing, holding five per

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cent of salt and three times its own volume of carbonic acid. It has lately been connected with the older bathhouse, while the newer one is supplied from the Boniface spring. This latter beneficent well was bored in 1746, and has, on account of the exceptionally large amount of lithium which it contains, a unique reputation for its action in cases of gout and rheumatism. The spring issues a few feet below the surface of the earth, and is pumped into the fountains and baths and also to filling machines, from which hundreds of thousands of bottles are sent away every year. The Boniface spring yields more than a million quarts daily, so that there is no danger of the supply running short. When thunderstorms are coming on it acts as a sort of natural barometer, foaming up vigorously two feet above its average level,

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and casting out yellow flakes from subterranean depths.

The springs were originally used only for obtaining salt, and in 1816, after the domain of Fulda had been annexed to the electorate of Hessa, this industry was abandoned. Then, to quote the choice language of a little guide to *Salzschlirf*, written by a physician in Fulda, "this saline, carbonated Brier-rose slumbered for the space of twenty years." In 1839 a gifted physician, Dr. Edward Martiny, began his lifework of making the healing springs more accessible and useful. Since then there has been a constant growth of their popularity.


I can almost always detect American influence somewhere in any German enterprise which shows exceptional energy and effectiveness, and I was not at all surprised to learn that the efficient man-

FROM BROOM TO HEATHER

ager, Herr Berlitz, had resided for some time in the United States, and was one of the earliest workers upon the *Omaha Bee*. I had an especial pride in letting him know that I came from a city which numbers a "Bathhouse" statesman among its chief counselors. Not many Americans are residing at the baths, though I had the pleasure of meeting General Swan of the United States army, who is recuperating after hard service in the Philippine Islands. A small group of Americans was here during the earlier part of July, and celebrated Independence-day by speeches and other diversions, while the Stars and Stripes fluttered proudly from the tall flag-pole which crowns the height of Marienlust, on the slopes of the Soderberg forest.

CHAPTER IX

The Doomed Villages

“E A L L Y now,” Ernestine broke in, “we ought to summon our energy and hunt up those Doomed Villages.”

I ought to remark that Ernestine is a breezy type of the young American, who has become a permanent and welcome addition to our group.

“What are the Doomed Villages, anyway, that we should leave all this for them?” asked Patty, looking away reluctantly from the groups of Friedelhausen peasants mowing rye in the fields along the river.

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“The Doomed Villages,” said Ernestine, not without pathos, “are two prosperous and idyllic communities lying on the high plateau above the Lumda; their names are Wermertshausen and Rüdtingshausen, and they are going to be demolished in order to make practice room for the modern guns of the German army. It’s a burning shame to treat the poor peasants so, and if we had the least spark of ambition we would go out and investigate the matter!”

“I always disliked that word ‘investigate,’ ” I intervened, “especially on a pleasure trip. It sounds far too strenuous and conscious. Moreover, my dear,” I added, with pardonable severity, “it is a deep pain to me that any member of my party should be taken in by such fatuous tales. Anything can be endured in a traveling companion except being

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'easy' when it comes to fairy stories and rumors invented in the village inn for the benefit of the credulous American."

"There's nothing credulous about it!" retorted Ernestine, warmly. "I heard it from some of the most sensible Staufenberg people. Yesterday at the dinner party that real fierce German major told me that the national government had fully decided that the places were to be wiped off the face of the earth."

"Well," said I, "it's doubtful whether there's anything to get tragic about; in all probability they are two forlorn pig villages compounded of mud and straw, to which no better fate could come than that of being pulverized in order to make room for something better. Of course the German Government will give the people full compensation for the destruction of their property."

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"But think of the outrage," pleaded Ernestine; "of the sacred associations of hearth and altar; of the ancient village church where generation after generation has worshiped and been baptized and married; of the quiet churchyard, where the rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep."

"I think it's hateful," said Patty. "The government ought to be ashamed to be such an abominable tyrant and to go trampling on the dearest rights of the humble poor."

"Hold, children!" I cried; "anything can be endured except overstrained sentimentality. Better far that we should hunt up these places and see what we can learn. Now that I think of it, there's going to be a country fair and cattle market Wednesday at Grünberg; we will combine things and make a day of it."



THE MARKET-PLACE, GRÜNBERG

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And so on the next Wednesday we took the newly-opened "secondary road" up the valley of the Lumda. A German "secondary road" is the most deliberate thing on the planet. The distance traveled was fifteen miles; the time required one hour and a half. It was accordingly after eleven when we reached the rustic metropolis, the crooked narrow paved streets of which were crowded with farmers' wagons, mostly loaded with hampers holding young pigs, clean and well-kept, but squealing desperately. In the midst of this din and confusion other farmers were trying to drive cows and calves through the throng; the combination made progress very difficult, but we pressed on over a stone bridge and past an old monastery until we came to the market-place. It was entirely empty.

No protests could help, and as Patty

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drew the line at "walking miles to see these heavy farmers quarrel about the price of pigs," we contented ourselves with roaming about the curious town and visiting the "Thieves' Tower," an irregularly built structure, which stood at what had evidently once been an angle of the city wall. We got a tolerable dinner at the inn, and took the train back to Londorf, lying at about the middle point in the course of the Lumda, from which we had determined to make our attempt to climb to Wermertshausen and Rüdtingshausen.

At about half-past one we stepped off at the somewhat deserted railway platform, but, as luck would have it, a rural postman was coming by. He was not acquainted with the way to Wermertshausen himself; but a small boy, who was seen coming from a distance. was from

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that place, and would surely be willing to guide us. We all waited for the boy to come along (he was bringing letters to mail), and at the postman's request he took us with him.

The youth seemed embarrassed or suspicious; at any rate, there was absolutely nothing to be gotten out of him as to the impending fate of his native town. About all we could extract was the name of an inn where we could get some coffee when we arrived. The road was without shade, and went directly up the steep mountainside, passing a noisy breaker where basaltic stone was being pounded into shape for macadamizing highways.

At this point a side road went off to the left, and the boy told us to keep "right on," as he was going to make a roundabout tour. "Gerade aus" is one of the favorite directions on the road, as

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well as one of the most maddening. To the one who gives it it means merely to follow a well-known path, and he never thinks of branching ways—of the possibility of a choice.

For another quarter of an hour we tugged and clambered up the steep, stony slope, which became more and more volcanic in appearance. In the shade of large beech-trees we sat and rested for awhile on big blocks of black basalt, and then entered a large quarry surrounded with disorderly heaps of broken stone, and situated at the beginning of a dense pine forest. Here the road on which we were traveling made a sharp turn in the opposite direction from that taken by the boy, and as a wild-looking quarryman told us to go "gerade aus," we took a single stony path and scrambled through the steep,

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weird quarry and among the spectral pines.

As we toiled up, Patty suggested that it was a mercy to humankind to destroy any village which had to be reached by such an effort. The single path grew less and less distinct, and we stumbled over rocks and mossy roots until we came into a grassy clearing between solid woods of pines and beeches. So dense was their growth that we were for awhile entirely unable to judge as to the points of the compass. The ground was soft and springy, and our progress slow. We came to a place where three similar cuttings through the forest diverged. On general principles we took the one to the left, and propped a large branch against a rock in order to guide us back if we should be compelled to retrace our steps—which seemed highly probable.

FROM BROOM TO HEATHER

All landmarks were lost, and our only hope lay in an instinctive feeling that we must come out somewhere if we kept on. Among the heather at the roadside grew many fragrant red strawberries, but we were too much concerned about the way to think of gathering them. We crossed lane after lane covered with untraveled turf and running deep into the woods, but none showed any way out. Finally we came to a road crossing our path, which gave signs of considerable use, and so we turned off to the right, though not without misgivings. The road brought us into a wonderful cathedral of towering, silvery-stemmed beech-trees, decorated with moss and showing on their lower branches only the lightest shimmer of green foliage. The surface of the ground, so far as we could see, was an unbroken carpet of dry leaves.

FROM BROOM TO HEATHER

Far off among these dim aisles we vaguely made out the figure of a woman, apparently gathering twigs, and with great relief of spirit we hastened toward her to inquire about our way. She also seemed to be hurrying, and I have some suspicion that she was collecting the wood without permission. After a while we managed to catch up with her, and were told that the traveled road would soon bring us in sight of Wermertshausen, so we joyously retraced our way among the columnar beeches, and the road brought us out upon an upper, breezy, well-tilled plain. Off to the left a few roofs could be seen peering out from orchards, while far to the right the point of a single spire rose from among low hills. Which way we were to go was a puzzle, so we kept "right on," walking over fine open turf almost as carpet-like

FROM BROOM TO HEATHER

in texture as the lawns of the Oxford quadrangles. At last we saw a family at work in a harvest-field, and I left the others sitting by the roadside while I picked my way along the edge of patches of beets and potatoes, came within hailing distance, and learned that Wermertshausen was the village to the left.

As we drew near to the place it became evident that it was by no means a forlorn spot, but an unusually attractive one. The quiet cemetery, the first outpost of the place, was surrounded by a well-kept hedge, and lifted up its crosses of snowy marble as though in protest against the barbarities of war. The sun shone brightly, the air was fresh and fine, overhead the lark trilled in a delirium of ecstasy, and as we entered the village we passed large gardens aflame with poppies or white with tall lilies. Most of the in-



THE CEMETERY, WERMERTSHAUSEN

FROM BROOM TO HEATHER

habitants were afield, but a few old men were busy about the courtyards, and a number of unusually neat and pretty children, in the gayest of costumes, were playing in the streets. The houses were well made and in good repair. They bore pious inscriptions, such as:

“God’s own Word and Luther’s Lore
Shall endure for evermore.”

On the little tile-roofed church, with its slate-covered cupola and round-leaded panes, stands the inscription:

This church was built
by 22 men
SOLI DEO GLORIA,
In the year of Christ
Anno 1755.
O God, take all into Thy care
Who to this temple shall repair.

Our inn was soon discovered by the help of its projecting sign bearing a glass and a tankard. The guest-room was

FROM BROOM TO HEATHER

empty except for the landlady, a woman of keen and refined appearance, dressed in Hessian garb. She promised to get us coffee and to bring cheese if we wished it, "although most people would n't care for it, as it is n't fully decayed."

Then upon the well-polished wooden table she spread out a heavy white cloth a yard and a half long and nearly a yard wide, made of homespun linen. At intervals of a foot apart ran several parallel bands of raised work, with highly decorative effect. When I learned that the flax had been raised and spun, and the linen woven and bleached in the family, a sudden, uncontrollable desire for the possession of this piece of cloth came over me, and I registered a vow that it should be mine.

"We'd like to know how you're going to get it," scoffed the others.



WERMERTSHAUSEN

FROM BROOM TO HEATHER

“The woman does n’t look like a person who would part very easily with her household treasures.”

“By natural amiability,” said I; “that method never fails.” On our manifesting interest, the spinning-wheel was brought down, and bundles of flax and wool. While eating our neatly served repast we made inquiries about the impending doom of the place. We soon discovered that there was a strong romantic attachment to the village.

“We have everything in such beautiful order in home and farm; I was born and brought up in this very house, and I should be most contented if we did not have to leave it at all; but if it has to come,” she added, with resignation, “it will have to come, and that ’s all there is to say. What could anybody possibly do to prevent it? If the government has

FROM BROOM TO HEATHER

decided, there is nothing to do but accept."

While we were conversing, a flaxen-haired daughter of four ran into the room, and we soon inferred that this was the "spoiled child" of the home, and a finished specimen of the type. Our camera on the table caught the eye of the fond mother, and with a shrewd woman's indirection she began to tell of the great disappointment they had all had in failing to get a picture of "little Ann" and her pretty peasant costume the last time they were in Marburg.

"Children," said I, parenthetically, "this is a found tidbit;" (we drop into German idioms now and then); "we get a good peasant composition without begging, and that tablecloth is as good as in my knapsack."

My offer to photograph little Ann was



THE INN AT WERMERTSHAUSEN

FROM BROOM TO HEATHER

promptly accepted, and the mother and other relatives set about assembling her holiday clothing, which consisted of a sea-green waist decorated with little flowers, a maroon accordion-plaited skirt with flowery bands of ribbon about it, a brocaded kerchief to wear about the shoulders, and a green, red-bordered silk handkerchief for the neck, a blue cotton apron, bright blue stockings with red and white roses knitted up the sides, and tiny black slippers.

All went well until little Ann suddenly decided that she would n't be photographed; she fought like a wildcat while being dressed, and refused, still more vociferously, to be posed. It took no less than a toy wagon, a watch, and all the jewelry in our party, as well as the assurance that the "strange man" was going away, to get her tolerably pacified, after

FROM BROOM TO HEATHER

which a successful snapshot was made. It is hardly necessary to add that I bought the tablecloth at a fair price, although Ernestine's frantic efforts to get a second one were entirely fruitless.

The road to Rüdtingshausen was bor-



RÜDDINGSHAUSEN

dered by great cherry-trees, and brought us in about half an hour to that prosperous town of eight hundred inhabitants. At the chief inn we encountered the same spirit of resignation which we had met in the smaller village. Nobody in the place knew definitely whether it was going to



THE FAMILY OF THE INN

FROM BROOM TO HEATHER

be destroyed or not; various government officials had been seen going about and taking observations, but nobody in Rüdtingshausen had been told what was to happen. If the village was to be destroyed, they would of course have to move out; where, they had not thought of deciding until they should learn something more certain.

CHAPTER X

Rothenburg the Mediæval



BELIEVE that Rothenburg-above-the-Tauber is the best-preserved specimen of an interesting mediæval city which is to be found in Germany. It is but little known to Americans, perhaps because it lies aside from the direct lines of European travel. It can be reached by a slow branch railroad from Steinach, on the line between Frankfort and Munich. We chose, I think, a better way by coming from the south, fifteen miles on foot over the Bavarian hills, upon roads mostly bordered by lines of loaded fruit-trees, among well-



OLD POSTING-COACH, NEAR ROTHENBURG

FROM BROOM TO HEATHER

tilled fields and through a number of the picturesque villages of this secluded and charming region, where the peasants are all friendliness and hospitality to the wanderer.

From the south the wanderer has also



THE OUTER WALL, ROTHENBURG

a glimpse of the city from a distance, surrounded with its circle of wall and crowned with its many towers, like the famous view of Jerusalem which first greeted the devout pilgrim before the days of railroads. To me this first view

FROM BROOM TO HEATHER

gave something of the joy which the explorer feels on sighting an unknown land, for (although I have since learned my error) I regarded myself as the discoverer of Rothenburg, having been led to my search merely by a beautiful portfolio of colored prints which I unearthed in the German department of the World's Fair in Chicago. The hills on which the city lies rise abruptly on the east side of the valley of the Tauber, an unpretentious stream, full of windings and showing many pretty features along its steep slopes; here a high bridge with a double row of arches; near by a Gothic chapel; further an old mill, and a quaintly-built manor house peering from among the green trees which border the stream. The gray walls in complete preservation make the circuit of the city, which is entered by six gates, each protected by

FROM BROOM TO HEATHER

outer works and towers; the heavy gates can still be locked with their old keys, as in the ancient days of war. The ancient town has played an important part in the history of "The Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation" from the earliest days, and well-known emperors, such as Rudolph of Hapsburg, who made it a "free city" of the empire; Maximilian, and Charles the Fifth resided for a time within its walls. In the stormy days of the Peasants' War and the Thirty Years' War it was likewise involved in the events which at those times affected all Germany.

We entered the city through the Hospital Gate on the south side, which is protected by a deep moat and elaborate bastions and stone battlements, as well as by a high tower. The outer rounded arch, crowned by a sun-dial, and bearing

FROM BROOM TO HEATHER

the date 1586, gives a hospitable welcome with its carved motto:

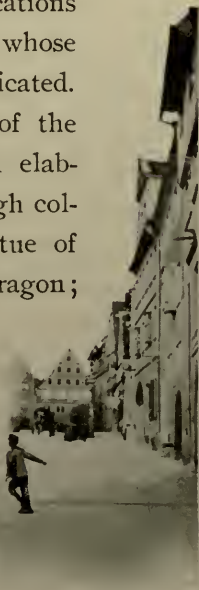
PAX INTRANTIBVS
SALVS EXEVTIBVS.

The heavy inner gate has a thick Gothic arch, and is flanked by rounded towers with loopholes for bowmen, and covered with a tiled roof supported on massive oaken timbers. The gates lead into the long Hospital Street, and at once on entering one gains the impression of a city of the Middle Ages, even to minute details. The houses are for the most part high-gabled buildings with much timber work, various styles of architecture representing different periods in the city's long history. Across the street still hang the lanterns on chains, as in old Paris. The street leads into the heart of the city, the old market-

FROM BROOM TO HEATHER

place, though before reaching this another high gate-tower is passed, which marks the line of fortifications of the older or inner city, whose limits are still plainly indicated.

The chief ornament of the great market-place is an elaborate fountain, with a high column on which is a statue of Saint George and the dragon; but the feature which attracts most attention is the superb town hall, rising on the west side, and uniting in its two parts the Gothic and renaissance styles into a harmonious whole.



A STREET IN ROTHENBURG

FROM BROOM TO HEATHER

The older Gothic part was built in 1240, and is conspicuous for its bold and graceful tower, square below and octagonal above, decorated with statues and crowned with a platform and belfry. In this building we discovered at once the motive of the central part of the German Government building at the World's Fair, the elaborate façade of which made so striking a feature of the promenade on the lake shore. The "new" building, with its imposing front and noble arcade, rises directly from the market, and was built in 1572; it is an impressive reminder of the wealth and public spirit of the city in the days of its prosperity. Within is the great hall or Kaisersaal, a huge room two stories high, now chiefly used for holding each year the historic play, "Der Meistertrunk," which perpetuates a traditional event of the Thirty Years' War.

FROM BROOM TO HEATHER

In 1631, Count Tilly with his Imperial troops captured the city, which was on the side of the Reformation. Exasperated by its stubborn resistance, he resolved to put to death the burgomaster, Nutsch, and the whole Council, and summoned them before him in his hall. The beautiful niece of the mayor fell upon her knees before the count, praying for mercy. With grim humor Tilly pointed to an immense beaker of wine, saying: "If the burgomaster will drink that down at one draught I will spare the city." Commending himself to the Divine assistance, the doughty mayor drained the bumper—a miraculous feat, to judge from the duplicate of the glass which is preserved in the building. The happy issue softened the stern heart of the conqueror, the occupation of the city was changed into a merry festival, and in gay

FROM BROOM TO HEATHER

procession conquerors and conquered rode out of the gates and visited the camp of the besiegers. Every year the details of this event are reproduced in dramatic form with full costumes and accessories, and the play in the town hall ends with the procession through the city to "Tilly's Camp." A good account of this play, with illustrations, was given in *Harper's Magazine* some years ago.

In the old tower of the town hall hangs the Sinners' Bell, which, in old times, was rung when a criminal was being led to execution. Our guide informed us, without the slightest trace of humor, that it was used now only to bring together the Common Council. Under the older part of the building are vaulted chambers containing the ancient archives. The guide lifted a small board fitted into the floor, and showed a shaky ladder leading



OLD WELL IN ROTHENBURG

FROM BROOM TO HEATHER

into gloomy underground chambers, the mediæval torture-room, and the dungeons. In the first are still to be seen the bench, the stone weights, and a half-decayed winch, by means of which the unfortunate victims were suspended. The prison cells are entirely dark, and entered by double doors bound with iron. In one of these cells Rothenburg's greatest burgomaster, Toppler, under whom the city reached its highest development, perished of hunger in 1408, or, according to another tradition, died of poison, which a faithful companion, disguised as a pilgrim, managed to bring to him. He was accused of treason by envious enemies. Toppler's dwelling-house, an imposing building in Gothic style, still stands under the name of the Griffin Inn, and is one of the many patrician homes which make a characteristic feature of

FROM BROOM TO HEATHER

the architecture of the city. They differ from the large houses of many old German cities, which combine trade purposes with domestic uses, in that they were designed solely for a well-to-do home life. They rise to a great height, and have usually a projecting low window built at one corner, a feature also reproduced in the German building at the Fair. Many of them bear inscriptions telling of royal or imperial guests who were sheltered, doubtless with princely hospitality, under their roofs. Such entertainment was very agreeable to the mediæval emperors, to judge from the numerous signs of their presence.

Rothenburg has also a number of ancient churches, full of the most interesting architectural details, often in small and unexpected features, which cause the heart of the lover of the antique to laugh

FROM BROOM TO HEATHER

for joy. Chief among the churches is the tall Jakobskirche, in many respects similar to the well-known minster at Ulm, and, like the latter, containing some marvelous specimens of carving in stone and dark-colored oak, and of old stained-glass with inimitable rich hues. At eight o'clock each morning the children of the Protestant public schools gather in this noble building, and begin the day with a simple service, partly choral, in which all take a hearty part, and their fresh young voices make the tall arches vibrate in harmony with the rolling tones of the great organ. We attended such an impressive service near the close of the school year, and heard a wholesome little sermon preached to the children. The whole feature seemed a very reverent, appropriate, and beautiful beginning of each schoolday.

FROM BROOM TO HEATHER

In a street passage near the church can be seen a dark spot on the upper part of the arch, connected with which the following legend is related: "The Rothenburgers had never had much opinion of the devil, because he had once let himself be outwitted by an old woman; but inasmuch as he had long since found his way to the place and had noticed this contempt, he determined to give a striking exhibition of his power. Once as a peasant was passing through this gateway on a sacred holiday, and was cursing in the most outrageous fashion, the fiend suddenly sprang out of the little door in the side of the gateway and flung the man high up against the wall. His lifeless body fell down, but the wretched soul still remained hanging on the wall, where it can be observed to this very day. It has a brown color, spotted with black."



A PAINTER AT WORK

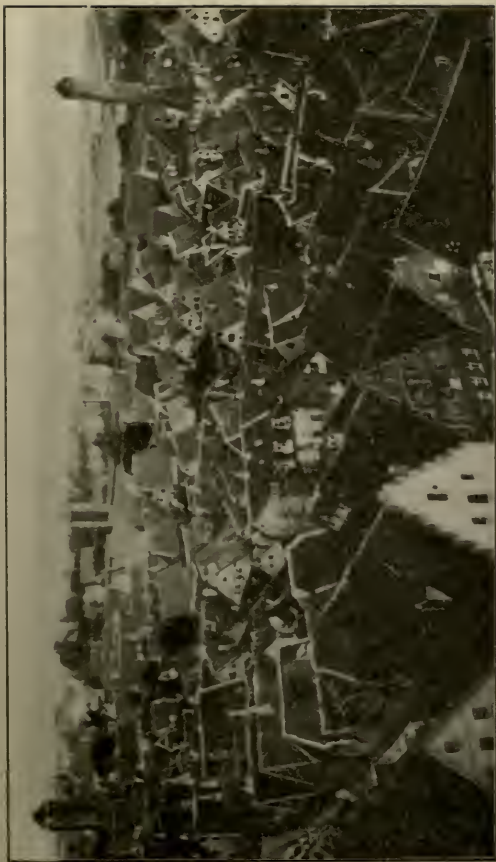
FROM BROOM TO HEATHER

St. Wolfgang's Church stands upon the spot where earlier was a simple shrine in honor of the patron saint of shepherds. It was completed in 1483, and is unique in being built on one side in a rich and highly-developed Gothic style, and on the other side forming a part of the city wall and fortifications. The side which looks outward is firmly strengthened by arched masonry and provided with arrow-slits, which pierce the inside wall of the church. By means of a narrow winding staircase there was an exit from the interior of the church to a semi-circular part of the wall, which begins at the church and ends at one of the city gates. Behind the altar is a portal which leads to a subterranean passage, going underneath the church and thence out into the open country. In this small edifice, which might well serve as a place of wor-

FROM BROOM TO HEATHER

ship for the Church militant, a sermon to shepherds is still preached every year on St. Wolfgang's-day, in pursuance of the provisions of an ancient bequest.

The circuit of the city just outside the walls makes a very enjoyable promenade, especially along the edge of the steep valley of the Tauber, and in this tour one comes to the site of the citadel in the days of the Hohenstaufen, the cradle of Rothenburg's development. A long, tongue-like projection juts out from the city toward the southwest, rising sharply from the valley on three sides. Here not only stood the ancient castle, but on this spot, beneath the shade of trees and under the free heavens, was held the High Court of Justice, the presiding officer sitting on a bench of stone and the spectators standing about in a circle in old Germanic fashion. The castle has



ROTHENBURG FROM THE CITY HALL

FROM BROOM TO HEATHER

long since disappeared, and even the ruins have vanished, their place being taken by a lovely park, in whose shade one can dream away delightful hours in the enjoyment of a panorama whose beauty can hardly be surpassed.

Rothenburg would well repay a much longer visit than we could make; it is, in fact, a favorite residence for artists, who spend months in sketching its interesting features. It possesses an excellent hotel, "The Stag," built on the city wall, and having a number of rooms in the back part of the building which look down into the charming valley of the Tauber. The city naturally suggests comparison with that other treasure-house of quaintness, Nuremberg. While it has not the huge gate-towers of the latter, nor the heaped-up masses of its frowning citadel, it offers in astonishing

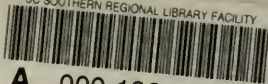
FROM BROOM TO HEATHER

completeness a series of perfectly preserved relics of the Middle Ages. Nuremberg has become a bustling city, surrounded by countless factories, and rapidly putting on the garb of modern improvements. The current of busy life has not yet reached Rothenburg, and the departed spirits of its worthy burghers seem still walking its streets.



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